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## Editorial

THE FIFTIETH anniversary of Walter Rauschenbusch's first major book, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, has been a notable year for assessing the meaning and validity of the "social gospel" in American Protestantism. Superficial rejection on the part of some theological realists in the thirties and forties has been replaced by a profounder appreciation of his grasp of Christian social ethics. Followers of Emil Brunner and Reinhold Niebuhr at first dismissed Rauschenbusch along with a liberalism which they interpreted in purely sociological or immanentist terms. But despite the apparent discontinuity in American theological realism which followed the appearance of *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, there has persisted a significant continuity. Richard Dickinson points out the similarities and continuities between Rauschenbusch and Niebuhr on some essential issues. Rauschenbusch is more "biblical" and Niebuhr more "liberal" than commonly understood.

Continuity and discontinuity in social Christianity is a theme also developed in the paper by Robert Moats Miller which takes Methodism in the twenties as the case in point. Rauschenbusch's death during World War I marked the end of an era but it did not prevent the power of the social gospel from penetrating great Protestant denominations. Methodist social pronouncements on war and peace, the League of Nations, disarmament, civil liberties and civil rights, academic freedom, labor organization, the eight-hour day, strikes, capitalism and communism showed a remarkable continuity with the era when the social gospel came of age. No one can defend the twenties as a glorious decade of prophetic social consciousness, but neither was it devoid of its heroic moments, as when Bishop Francis J. McConnell led the investigation of the steel industry.

On its scientific side the twenties produced that significant sociological work by H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*. Behind it lay the monumental work of Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch whose major works were translated into English about 1930. Both these German scholars developed a typological method which has been functionally relevant for theories of church social action. Niebuhr, Pope, Yinger, and others have modified the typology so as to combine sociological analysis with social action theory. In the case of H. Richard Niebuhr's *Christ and Culture* the typological analysis is combined with Christian ethics to provide the dynamic perspective of "Christ transforming culture." In this union of sociology and ethics we have a recovery of the union of empirical analysis and normative perspective which characterized the era of Rauschenbusch's greatest productivity.

W. G. M.



# The Church's Responsibility for Society

## I. *Rauschenbusch and Niebuhr: Brothers Under the Skin?*

RICHARD DICKINSON

IT IS POPULARLY, but often uncritically, assumed that Reinhold Niebuhr differs radically from Walter Rauschenbusch in his conception of history and its meaning. His views are frequently seen as corrective for the "inadequate" understandings of the Social Gospel prophet. They should more properly be understood as correctives for the popular theology of the 1920's and '30's rather than for the work of Walter Rauschenbusch.

The aim of this article is to challenge the accepted theory of a radical difference. The thesis herein presented is that though there are differences of emphasis resulting from social conditions and theological environment, their understanding of history is remarkably similar.

It is important to keep in mind the environment in which these men wrote and the specific message they were seeking to preach; otherwise one accuses them improperly on the basis of omission of material rather than confusion or error of thought. Rauschenbusch lived in an age basking in the light of progressive evolution but often oblivious to the Church's mission in the world, where the Kingdom of Evil contends with the Kingdom of God. The religion he fought was not ascetic or other-worldly in principle, but it was hiding from the world behind theological speculations and churchly niceties. Rauschenbusch called the church to repentance; he pleaded with Christians to centralize the Kingdom of God, which he interpreted to be the focus and concern of Jesus' witness. He had no patience with those who pretend that the church is the unique manifestation of the Kingdom in history; rather did he envisage all social relationships (with particular stress upon the economic, since this was the major problem of his generation both in theory and everyday practice) as part of the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of labor, justice, and love. He sought individual

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repentance and redemption but passionately opposed those who thought to divorce individual from social redemption. Sin is not a simple private relation between man and God; humanity always crowds the courtroom.<sup>1</sup> Were a few souls condemned to everlasting torment in hell, all humanity would suffer with them until they were delivered from their misery.

We can hope for this Kingdom because God is working in history; we must work toward the Kingdom because God has created us for this destiny. Furthermore, contends Rauschenbusch, we shall attain that Kingdom!

Niebuhr's problem is different. He has seen the optimism of progressive evolution rise with bursts of enthusiasm during the 1920's. But he also perceives very clearly that these enthusiasms were not chastened with true repentance. Men institutionalized and multiplied their sin. Social problems were attacked, but their alleviation introduced a legion of others. Man's sin reeked in the Detroit factories; it exploded in the 1930's with depression and disturbing reports from Germany. Niebuhr's sensitive spirit suffered from, and rebelled against, the sin of man on every hand, and yet he knew his own implication in the guilt of man. Niebuhr was even in 1936 a mature child of an age of shattered dreams. His own answer, and the answer which he preached to that generation, was threefold: man's sin, God's grace, and man's hope. Man's sin makes impossible the complete realization of God's will in history; God's grace redeems history and makes it meaningful; man's hope lies in the culmination and transformation of history, which is neither a negation of history nor an assertion of its absolute value.

### I. THE TERM "KINGDOM OF GOD"

We are often confused about Rauschenbusch's and Niebuhr's concept of history. Part of this confusion stems from their polemic emphases, but perhaps even more from the fact that they use the concept of the Kingdom of God differently. Rauschenbusch speaks of the Kingdom as a practical sociological and historical possibility—of dynamic relationships—based on God's mercy and man's obedience. Niebuhr speaks of the Kingdom as a theoretical and speculative possibility, but practical impossibility, because of man's pride and sin. There are the historical and eschatological dimensions of existence, though the eschatological impinges every moment upon the historical. Here is a major distinction in definition. Rauschenbusch talks of the developmental growth of the Kingdom of God *only* in the temporal, historical dimension. He would not claim that God's total will is attainable in history. Death does come to individuals and civilizations, and beyond

<sup>1</sup> *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1917, p. 48.

history there is God. When Rauschenbusch speaks of the Kingdom of God, he speaks of historical existence as distinguished from, though not alienated from, the eschatological. In addition to his discussion of the Kingdom he even has a separate chapter on eschatology, in which he includes such important comments as the following:

A progressive Kingdom of righteousness happens all the time in installments, like our own sanctification. Our race will come to an end in due time; the astronomical clock is already ticking which will ring in the end. Meanwhile we are on the march toward the Kingdom of God, and getting our reward by every fractional realization of it which makes us hungry for more.<sup>2</sup>

Niebuhr, on the other hand, challenges the liberal concept of the Kingdom, suggesting that its supporters have forgotten the eschatological dimension and the Cross.<sup>3</sup> He always thinks of the Kingdom of God in both the historical and eschatological dimensions. When we put the following quotation from Niebuhr alongside the preceding one from Rauschenbusch, we can see how similar are their understandings of history. "The double connotation of end as both *telos* and *finis* expresses, in a sense, the whole character of human history and reveals the fundamental problem of human existence. All things in history move toward both fulfillment and dissolution, toward the fuller embodiment of their essential character and toward death."<sup>4</sup>

Rauschenbusch and Niebuhr say basically the same thing from different perspectives. One must seek to understand the specific meaning which each attaches to the Kingdom concept. In addition to this semantic problem one ought to remember that Rauschenbusch fought to demonstrate that the historical processes are essential in God's plan for creation, while Niebuhr has striven to remind man that the social and historical process is not the *only* facet of the Christian message. They have hold of the same message from different ends.

## II. SIN AND HISTORY

Rauschenbusch has defined sin as selfishness; Niebuhr conceives of sin as pride. But these formal conceptions should not blind one to their basic agreement on the nature and power of sin. The social dimension of the power of sin has been largely introduced by Rauschenbusch, and carried on by Niebuhr in a little different light. The former saw sin as a personal decision and an act of free will,<sup>5</sup> but he was as much impressed with the

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 227.

<sup>3</sup> "Human Destiny," *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953, pp. 85-88.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 287.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 91.

social as the biological transmission of sin (just what he understood by biological transmission of sin is not clear).<sup>6</sup> He was appalled at the entrenchment and perpetuation of sin in institutional forms and saw how sinners are fortified by their compatriots, but he was basically optimistic about the future possibilities of social arrangements which would work to decrease sin and encourage justice and love.

Niebuhr has also been appalled by corporate sinfulness, but at least in his early writings he was darkly pessimistic about society's capability of bringing about real moral progress. Yet 1937 is not his final word. Niebuhr's later writings show a shift to a more neutral understanding of power—"power is not evil in itself."<sup>7</sup> The same man who wrote *Moral Man and Immoral Society* was able to state twenty years later: "We could not bear the burdens required to save the world from tyranny if there were no prospects of success. The necessity of this measure of historic hope marks the spiritual stature of the collective, as distinguished from the individual, man."<sup>8</sup>

Niebuhr and Rauschenbusch have different formal conceptions of sin, but Niebuhr's understanding of sin as pride finds its counterpart in his predecessor's understanding of sin as selfishness—a term more suited to demonstrating the effects of sin in social and individual life. That sanctification is possible in God's presence is maintained by both men, but perfectionism is clear in neither. Both strongly emphasize the persistent presence of sin in human decisions and actions, individually and socially. Niebuhr writes:

Here is the absurdity in a nutshell. Original sin, which is by definition an inherited corruption, or at least an inevitable one, is nevertheless not to be regarded as belonging to his essential nature, and is therefore not outside the realm of his responsibility. Sin is natural for man in the sense that it is universal but not in the sense that it is necessary. . . . Sin is to be regarded as neither a necessity of man's nature nor yet as a mere caprice of his will.<sup>9</sup>

More than anything else such passages demonstrate the seriousness with which Niebuhr takes sin. But Rauschenbusch is no less convinced of the power of sin, though his reasoning follows pragmatic evidence more than speculative theology.

We set our desires against the rights of others, and disregard the claims of mercy, or gratitude, or parental love. Our self love is wrought up to hot ill-will, hate,

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67.

<sup>7</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>8</sup> *The Irony of American History*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952, p. 145.

<sup>9</sup> "Human Nature," *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, p. 242.

lying, slander, and malevolence. . . . The element of selfishness emerges as the character of sin matures. . . . In the higher forms of sin it assumes the aspect of conflict between the selfish ego and the common good of humanity; or, expressing it in religious terms, it becomes a conflict between self and God.<sup>10</sup>

He further broadly asserts: "Any religious tendency or school of theology must be tested by the question whether it does justice to the religious consciousness of sin."<sup>11</sup>

In such descriptions of the working of sin in the world Rauschenbusch never loses sight of the fact that sin is neither confined to certain types of action traditionally conceived as sin nor is it so relative and abstract that it cannot be seen in specific offenses against man and God. Rauschenbusch preaches repentance as passionately as Niebuhr: "The ABC of social renewal and moral advance is for each of us to face our sins sincerely and get on a basis of frankness with God and ourselves. . . . Personal repentance is a social advance."<sup>12</sup> "Yet it is a matter of unspeakable difficulty for the Kingdom of God to make headway against the inherent weakness of human nature and the social encroachments of the Kingdom of Evil."<sup>13</sup> As far as the historical power, manifestations, and consequences of sin are concerned it appears certain that Rauschenbusch and Niebuhr would concur. Undoubtedly they would experience more trouble in agreeing speculatively on the amount of righteousness and love which can be expressed in history.

### III. HISTORICAL PROGRESS

Rauschenbusch attacks the Christian apocalypticism and other-worldliness of his religious contemporaries. He interprets the demands of God to impinge upon the present because history is God's concern. He says that Jesus "took his illustrations from organic life to express the idea of the gradual growth of the Kingdom. . . . To him the Kingdom of God was both future and present. Whoever can harbour that antimony has risen above apocalypticism."<sup>14</sup> "He never transferred the Kingdom hope from earth to heaven. The Kingdom was so much of this earth that Jesus expected to return to earth from heaven in order to set it up."<sup>15</sup>

We need not, however, spend time demonstrating Rauschenbusch's hope for historical progress, for this aspect of his work meets greatest challenge. Rather must we seek (1) to find how Niebuhr appeals to the

<sup>10</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 46-47.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>12</sup> *The Social Principles of Jesus*, New York and London: Association Press, 1916, p. 81.

<sup>13</sup> *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, p. 166.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 220.

<sup>15</sup> *Christianizing the Social Order*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1913, p. 66.

importance of earthly affairs, and (2) how Rauschenbusch recognizes the contingent aspect of all our accomplishments. This is our next task.

(1) Niebuhr states the logical necessity for the importance of history:

The love which enters history as suffering love must remain suffering love in history. Since this love is the very law of history it may have its tentative triumphs in history, for history cannot stand in complete contradiction to itself. Yet history does stand in complete contradiction to the law of love.<sup>16</sup>

Here Niebuhr begins with the statement of a logical necessity but ends with a religious paradox in the last sentence. Yet the affirmation of history's importance, prompted by faith rather than reason, is found so often that Niebuhr's polemic pessimism is betrayed by his optimism in faith: "Biblical faith affirms the potential meaning of history. . . . It is in history that the divine power which bears and completes history is revealed."<sup>17</sup> The *Logos* and the love commandment of Jesus are indications to Niebuhr that history should be taken seriously.<sup>18</sup> He says that history is dynamic and within it there are "tasks" and "obligations" for development and growth. He would not identify these historic changes with moral progress, but if he wishes to call them tasks and obligations, and if he is willing to admit that these tasks and obligations are sometimes performed, there is a sort of moral progress in history, though neither cumulative nor transmissible to following generations. Since this progress must be personal, it must also be social, and there are open channels, through charismatic leadership, for progress from one generation to another. Niebuhr does think progress a historical possibility, though the Anti-Christ and the Cross stand at the *finis* of history as grim reminder that our highest attainments are fraught with perils of sin.

(2) Was Rauschenbusch an unqualified utopian? Not at all! He modified his teachings of potential achievements in history with reservations about the ultimate heights to be reached. He does not specifically speculate as to whether the ideal could ever be finally and absolutely attained, but his dynamic conception of history makes him refuse to think of the Kingdom as a static possibility. Quotations from Rauschenbusch such as the following show how near he and Niebuhr are in their understandings of historical progress and historical possibilities: "The idea of the Kingdom of God is not identified with any special social theory. It means justice, freedom, fraternity, labor, joy."<sup>19</sup> "An eschatology which is expressed in terms of

<sup>16</sup> "Human Destiny," *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, p. 49.

<sup>17</sup> *Faith and History*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949, p. 114.

<sup>18</sup> "Human Destiny," *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, p. 93.

<sup>19</sup> *The Social Principles of Jesus*, p. 75.



historic development has no final consummation. Its consummations are always the basis for further developments. The Kingdom of God is always coming, but we can never say 'Lo here.'<sup>20</sup> "The sinfulness of man remains so strong that the love and mercy of God are necessary at all stages of human history to overcome the Kingdom of Evil, and to carry to fuller fruition the Kingdom of God."<sup>21</sup>

How much these statements sound like those of Niebuhr: "History moves toward the realization of the Kingdom, but yet the judgment of God is upon every new realization."<sup>22</sup>

The goodness of Christ must be embodied in the stuff of history. But it can never be so embodied that it does not stand in contradiction to history in judgment and become the completion of history only by divine mercy rather than human achievement.<sup>23</sup>

Both men have struggled earnestly with the problem of the meaning of history; both have dealt seriously with the sinfulness of man; both have seen the imperative for historic achievements; and both have concluded that though historic process has meaning and value, there is a transcendent value which somehow consummates and transfuses historical meaning. History knows proximate achievements which have ultimate significance; but the ultimate purposes of creation are not restricted to, nor exhausted within, the historical and sociological. They are somehow caught up in the eschatological dimension of existence.

#### IV. GOD AND HISTORICAL PROGRESS

The Social Gospel is not Marxism peppered with pious phrases. The bedrock foundation of Rauschenbusch's theology is the grace of God operative in his creation; it is not humanism in sheep's skin. Historical progress is possible within God's grace and the freedom he has given man. It has become commonplace for neo-orthodox apologists to think that the Social Gospel stream forgot about God. But Niebuhr, their most popular spokesman, and Rauschenbusch, their frequent enemy, hold nearly the same line. Niebuhr writes: "History must include not only the divine completion of human incompleteness but a purging of human guilt and sin by divine judgment and mercy."<sup>24</sup> With equal vigor Rauschenbusch states: "We are apt to think that progress is natural. Progress is more than natural. It is

<sup>20</sup> *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, p. 227.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.

<sup>22</sup> "Human Destiny," *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, p. 93.

<sup>23</sup> *Faith and History*, p. 213.

<sup>24</sup> "Human Destiny," *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, p. 288.



divine."<sup>25</sup> He states further that "the Kingdom of God is divine in its origin, progress, and consummation,"<sup>26</sup> and nothing can explain historical progress to the religious mind—unless it be the power of God. Finally, "The Kingdom of God is miraculous all the way, and is the continuous revelation of the power, the righteousness, and the love of God."<sup>27</sup> With all his emphasis upon the immanence of God Rauschenbusch has not succumbed to mere immanentism but has focused on both immanence and the transcending power and love of God. The Kingdom is both present and future, for like God it is eternal in the midst of time, but its future lies "among the mysteries of God."<sup>28</sup> When it is realized that Rauschenbusch has not forsaken transcendence, he will be more properly understood and appreciated. His environment required him to stress God working in history; Niebuhr's environment persuaded him to stress the God above history. But their messages are of the same cloth.

#### V. HISTORY AND FAITH

History is meaningful and important, but this meaning cannot be known outside of faith. This is the assertion of both Niebuhr and Rauschenbusch. The latter states:

All Christian discussions of the past and future must be religious, and filled with the consciousness of God in human affairs. God is in history. He has the initiative. Where others see blind forces working in dumb agony, we see moral will working toward redemption and education. A religious view of history involves a profound sense of the importance of the moral issues of life.<sup>29</sup>

This statement is like that of Niebuhr's: "Man, in his strength and weakness, is too ambiguous to understand himself unless his rational analyses are rooted in a faith that he is comprehended from beyond the ambiguities of his own understanding."<sup>30</sup>

Regarding the basic essentials for the understanding of history, there appears to be close agreement between Rauschenbusch and Niebuhr. There are of course nuances of meaning and interpretation on which these men could not agree—in fact one could anticipate divergence in such concepts as the Cross, the Church, the quantity of love expressible in history, etc. Whereas radical disagreement between Rauschenbusch and Niebuhr has been generally postulated, however, there appears to be surprising una-

<sup>25</sup> *Christianizing the Social Order*, p. 30.

<sup>26</sup> *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, p. 139.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 141.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 224.

<sup>30</sup> *Faith and History*, p. 101.

nimity. This unanimity has been obscured by polemic intentions, and by different understandings of the Kingdom itself.

It is, perhaps, the greatness of both men which makes their teachings appear irreconcilable. This greatness lies basically in a fervent passion for making the Christian Church and the Christian message speak to a world which knew it not. Neither could tolerate the alienation of the Church and its message from the world. And both picked up the theological stick from the end which they thought most needed by their generation.

Neither man would have called himself a theologian. Neither man would make pretensions to have written a complete and systematic theology. And yet both men are judged more often from a theological perspective than from the view of social ethics, in which field both did their major work.

The judgments men make on the thoughts and theories of others are notably insensitive. We generally dismiss their environment, their personality, and their purposes. Yet a truth is neither solely relative to a particular place and time nor fully divorced from such particulars. If we would understand and appreciate Niebuhr and Rauschenbusch, and if we would appreciate their stature as social prophets, we must know them in their times and circumstances. If we try to appreciate and understand, we may find them, in these matters, brothers under the theological skin.

## 2. Sociological Forms of Religious Expression in Western Christianity

FREDERICK A. SHIPPEY

ERNST PETER WILHELM TROELTSCH (1865-1923) was born into a physician's family in Augsburg, Germany, as the closing shots of the Civil War echoed across the United States. Under Lutheran influence he pursued studies at Erlangen, Göttingen, and Berlin. For some time he served as an evangelical curate in Munich. But during most of his adult life he combined his great talents into the threefold vocation of teacher, writer, and civic leader. He taught theology at Bonn and Heidelberg, and later became professor of philosophy at University of Berlin. Among his colleagues and contemporaries are found such well-known scholars as Tonnies, Simmel, Vierkandt, Scheler, Frazer, Durkheim, Sombart, and Max Weber.

He was a prolific writer, and his numerous essays, books, and reviews are now contained in four volumes of his collected works called *Gesammelte Schriften*. At least two works have been translated into English, and these will be discussed in a few moments. Friedrich von Hügel speaks of *The Social Teaching* as a "monumental work," while Charles Gore calls it the German historian's "greatest book." Karl Mannheim considers Troeltsch as belonging to that group of scholars who first gave sociology the stamp of an academic science in Germany.

### I

It is the purpose of this article to raise for consideration several insights which originate in *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches* (Volumes I and II) and *Protestantism and Progress*. These three volumes record Troeltsch's investigation of the development of Christianity from its beginning down to the modern world. The remarkable studies made by Harnack (*History of Dogma*) and by Max Weber (*The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*) inspired Troeltsch to embark upon a project designed

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to discover "the intrinsic sociological idea of Christianity, and its structure and organization." Further, he sought to find out "what has been the actual influence of the churches upon social phenomena?"<sup>1</sup> And vice versa. This historical exploration envisaged a direct survey of the Ancient World, the Middle Ages, the Reformation, and finally the Modern World. This gigantic undertaking could scarcely have been managed except by a person of Troeltsch's vast learning, high standards of scholarship, and tremendous energy. At the conclusion of the project he calls attention to "a general sociological structure which has arisen out of the centre of religious thought."<sup>2</sup> This phenomenon is our present locus of concern.

No attempt will be made here to trace the development of the author's argument in detail throughout the several volumes. However, possibly, some readers may welcome at least a skeletal recapitulation of materials as a stimulus to memory. Troeltsch achieved an exploration of the Ancient World under the rubrics of Hebrew Graeco-Roman World, Jesus and the Gospel, Stoicism, Pauline Christology, and Early Catholicism. A study of the Middle Ages was attained through a scrutiny of the Mediaeval Unity of Civilization, International Ecclesiastical Domination, the Floodtide of Asceticism, Thomism, and the Crystallization of the Sect Movement. Then an account of Protestantism was accomplished by a survey of the Reformation, Nominalism, Lutheranism, Calvinism, Capitalism and Its Culture, Sect-type and Mysticism, and Ascetic Protestantism. Finally, respecting the Modern World, the discussion embraces Protestantism, Political-Social Institutions, Economic Organization, and Modern Religious Feeling. Failure to read these works *in toto* is to miss the cumulative impact of the materials upon Troeltsch: that pluralism characterizes authentically the sociological expression of Western Christianity.

Since it is not our object to follow the author's argument in detail, we can turn our attention directly to the findings of this monumental study. Troeltsch noted at once the lack of a unified or single community of Christian believers. As he says:

Only when faith in Jesus, the Risen and Exalted Lord, became the central point of worship in a new religious community did the necessity for organization arise. From the very beginning there appeared the three main types of the sociological development of Christian thought: the church, the sect, and mysticism.<sup>3</sup>

Thus from an extensive historical investigation Troeltsch found the several

<sup>1</sup> *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, The Macmillan Company, 1931, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 993.

characteristic forms of religious expression which arose in Christianity and which have appeared together side-by-side down through the centuries.<sup>4</sup> These are parallel traditions which originated in the same place. A consideration of these three deserves our attention now.

What does Troeltsch mean by the *church*? The church is a religious institution which regards itself as being endowed with grace and salvation. These are held as twin objective treasures which are available to the masses of mankind. The church transfers all divine and sacred character from individuals to the objective organ of redemption—i.e., to itself. The church possesses a redeeming energy which is directly miraculous in contrast with all other kinds of human power.

Because it is universal in principle and desires to cover the life of humanity, the church utilizes the State and the ruling classes. It weaves these elements into its own life, thus becoming an integral part of the existing social order. While it seeks to stabilize and to determine the social order, it actually becomes dependent upon the upper classes. This dependence often remains unacknowledged or is even vigorously denied. The church adjusts itself to the world, to society, to the State. This adjustment makes possible a kind of domination over the masses, but it also produces an overwhelming conservatism. In order to become a popular religious organization the church has had to accept the social order. This status is both a boon and a spiritual liability. It has been so from the beginning.

What is Troeltsch's concept of the *sect*? First, a word of explanation is needed according to the author.

The word "sect," however, gives an erroneous impression. Originally the word was used in a polemical and apologetic sense, and it was used to describe groups which separated themselves from the official Church, while they retained certain fundamental elements of Christian thought; by the very fact, however, that they were outside the corporate life of the ecclesiastical tradition—a position, moreover, which was usually forced upon them—they were regarded as inferior side-issues, one-sided phenomena, exaggerations or abbreviations of ecclesiastical Christianity. That is, naturally, solely the viewpoint of the dominant churches, based on the belief that the ecclesiastical type alone has any right to exist.<sup>5</sup>

This introductory statement clears the way for a positive definition and appropriate comments.

Troeltsch states that "the sect is a voluntary society composed of strict and definite Christian believers bound to each other by the fact that all

<sup>4</sup> *Vide* Leopold von Wiese and Howard Becker, *Systematic Sociology*, New York: Wiley & Sons, 1932, Chapter XLIV; Benton Johnson, "A Critical Appraisal of the Church-Sect Typology," *American Sociological Review*, February, 1957, pp. 88 ff.; and other critical studies.

<sup>5</sup> *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, pp. 333-34.

have experienced 'the new birth.'"<sup>6</sup> It is a gathered group marked by a partial withdrawal from the world. It renounces the idea of dominating society, and therefore from time to time it may be indifferent, tolerant, or even hostile toward the world. Usually found in small groups, adherents emphasize the law instead of grace and seek to set up within their own circle the Christian order based upon love. Individuals aspire to inward perfection. But they also strive to practice a spiritual discipline of doctrine and of morals in order to produce a circle of saints. They aim at a distinct personal fellowship between members of the group. Consociation and intermingling are important goals. All this is done "in preparation for and expectation of the coming Kingdom of God." This strikes the relevant chiliastic note endemic to the type.

It is noteworthy that the sect does not feel the need to come to terms with thought in general and therefore conveys the impression of an anti-intellectualism. Possibly it is more accurate to regard the position as a-intellectual, since the sect is indifferent to the demands and domain of reason except where an uncalled-for interference with its life or activity becomes apparent. Oddly enough, spiritual controversy and ethical rivalry are tolerated without the loss of faith in the absolute character of the truth possessed by members of the sect. This is consistent, for the toleration is an external one applied generally on an intergroup basis. The perspective and emphases of the sect connect it predominantly with the lower classes or with those elements opposed to the state. Sociologically speaking, it is an out-group which works upward from below within society.

What is meant by *mysticism*? Troeltsch considers mysticism as a unique expression of Christianity which can be clearly distinguished from that of the church and the sect. In discussing this third type he declares: "From its standpoint the truth of salvation is inward and relative, a personal possession which is unutterable, and lies unspoken beneath all literal forms."<sup>7</sup> The terms "spiritual religion" and "mysticism" are used both together and also interchangeably throughout the author's discussion, thus conveying the impression that they are practically synonymous. In any case mysticism takes the world of religious ideas which has hardened into formal worship and doctrine and transforms it into a purely personal and inward experience. It assigns relative significance to the biblical, dogmatic, and ritual forms in which truth is expressed. Individuals are encouraged to suspect all forms of externalism and conformity whether doctrinal, ritual, or

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 993.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 998.



administrative. What is stressed here is an independence of all historical forms respecting religious truth.

Its esoteric and naïve conception of group life leads to the congregating of individuals on a purely personal basis with thorough-going disregard for continuity and for permanence of form. Thus persons fraternize irregularly on the basis of spirit recognizing spirit. Because Christian piety is conceived as a living creative movement of the present day, and because great emphasis is placed upon toleration and freedom of conscience, mysticism has become a refuge for the religious life of the cultured classes. Troeltsch urges that this third type has an affinity with the autonomy of science and this spirit has made possible a truly scientific theology based upon universals. Without science, however, mysticism leads to extravagant and emotional forms of piety. Because group life is held in such a low estimate, fellowship becomes sacrificed upon the altar of individualism. For mysticism, however, other values apparently more than outweigh this collective disadvantage.

According to Dr. Francis A. Christie, "Troeltsch depicts the struggle of an idea to mix itself with life."<sup>8</sup> In recapitulation, Troeltsch's survey of Christian history yielded a discovery of three characteristic forms of religious expression: the church, the sect, and mysticism. He urges that "the diversity of ideas which the Christian conception of truth contains is evident in these three different types of religion."<sup>9</sup> This triumvirate constitutes a restatement and expansion of Max Weber's two polar types.

It should be pointed out that Troeltsch regards the church, the sect, and mysticism as static and discrete phenomena. He reports upon their co-appearance down through the centuries of Christian history. For him, they represent three distinguishable strands or traditions which have a unique influence upon the religious thinking of the respective adherents. In Troeltsch's eyes all three are equally genuine and all three derive from the very beginnings of Christianity. This describes Christianity as an individual totality with multiform manifestations.

## II

Undoubtedly at this point in the discussion one might wonder what all this has to do with the work of religion in the United States. Just how much will be revealed in the pages which follow. Therein will be drawn the lines of passage and development which brought the ideas of Troeltsch across the Atlantic Ocean to these shores.

<sup>8</sup> Stuart A. Rice, ed., *Methods in Social Science*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931, p. 423.

<sup>9</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 997.



Among scholars H. Richard Niebuhr is perhaps the leading follower of Troeltsch in America. Niebuhr has scarcely written a book without acknowledging his debt not only to Weber and Tawney but also particularly to the German historian. Joining Professor Niebuhr in the intellectual accolade is a long list of U.S. scholars: Howard Becker, Joachim Wach, Joseph Fichter, J. Milton Yinger, Liston Pope, Harold Pfautz, and Russell Dynes. This leaves unmentioned, of course, many scholars abroad who also have had to reckon with Troeltsch when constructing their systems of religious thought. In contemporary Protestantism he is a difficult man to circumvent. Even the distinguished Emil Brunner confirms this.

However, we will focus our attention here upon the appropriation and development of the Troeltschian thesis as it appears in two books by H. Richard Niebuhr: *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (1929) and *Christ and Culture* (1951). These books were published twenty-two years apart, suggesting possibly the prolonged Jabbokean (Genesis 32:22) wrestling bout in which Niebuhr has been engaged with the German historian during most of the former's adult life. Possibly few Americans know the writings of Troeltsch as thoroughly.

Turning first to *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* one notes how the author, while accepting the polar religious types of Weber and Troeltsch, has actually introduced the concept of a continuum which was at the most barely implicit in *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*. Here Niebuhr is concerned with the same basic problem as Troeltsch, namely a discovery of "the reciprocal influence of the churches on the other aspects of social organization."<sup>10</sup> Thus out of his experience on the American scene, Niebuhr gives a clear statement of the task he has set himself to accomplish. He writes:

The effort to distinguish churches primarily by reference to their doctrine and to approach the problem of church unity from a purely theological point of view appeared to him to be a procedure so artificial and fruitless that he found himself compelled to turn from theology to history, sociology and ethics for a more satisfactory account of denominational differences and a more significant approach to the question of union.<sup>11</sup>

This volume then was the first major work to demonstrate the importance of sociology for ethics and theology and for the whole life of the church on this continent, just as Weber, Troeltsch, and Tawney had demonstrated for Europe.

<sup>10</sup> J. Milton Yinger, in *An Introduction to the History of Sociology*, Harry E. Barnes, ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, p. 311.

<sup>11</sup> *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*, Henry Holt & Co., 1929, p. vii.

The book's basic theme is that denominationalism represents not so much theological differences as it does "the accommodation of Christianity to the caste system of human society. . . . The division of the churches closely follows the division of men into the castes of national, racial and economic groups."<sup>12</sup> No matter if the sect starts out with the express purpose of bringing the gospel to the disinherited, the poor, the lower classes, the out-group, within a surprisingly short time the religious group prospers economically, begins to hold property, becomes impressed with ecclesiastical architecture and organization, raises its formal educational requirements for the ministry, and then presses very earnestly toward the goal of becoming a thriving, respectable denomination. Thus, from a worldly viewpoint, the group gets ahead.

It is this movement from sect to denomination which engages the attention of Niebuhr.<sup>13</sup> He speaks of it as being "the inevitable tendency accompanying the rise of a religious group in fortune and culture—the tendency toward a relaxation of the ethical demand and toward formalization of the cult."<sup>14</sup> And again he writes, "But most important among the causes of decline of revolutionary churches into denominations is the influence of economic success. The churches of the poor all become middle-class churches sooner or later."<sup>15</sup>

An extensive survey of materials on American denominational life has led Niebuhr to conceive of a continuum connecting the polar types of sect and church. He found it to be a dynamic one-way relationship. The movement is always toward the church type. As the religious group moves along the continuum, it *changes in sociological form*, adapting itself to a new kind of ministry. The new kind of ministry is a natural outcome deriving from the upward mobility of the sect. New people call for a new type of religion. Detailed investigation of these phenomena has led Niebuhr to observe that "doctrines and practice change with the mutations of social structures, not vice versa; the ideological interpretation of such changes quite misses the point."<sup>16</sup> Although Harold Pfautz especially has elaborated this point,<sup>17</sup> many other scholars concur in the observation: Joseph Fichter, H. Paul Douglass, Samuel Kincheloe, J. Milton Yinger, and Liston Pope, just to

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>13</sup> Niebuhr purposely omits mysticism from the discussion due to the rarity of such phenomena on this side of the Atlantic Ocean. Evidently for him the sect-church continuum embraces rather completely religious life in the United States.

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 38-39.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>17</sup> "The Sociology of Secularization: Religious Groups," *American Journal of Sociology*, September, 1955.

mention a few. All these scholars have made use of Niebuhr's modification of the Troeltschean theory.

Turning now to *Christ and Culture* we encounter another and more drastic modification of Troeltsch. Niebuhr sets out "to supplement and in part to correct" *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*. Continuing he writes,

Troeltsch has taught me to respect the multiformity and individuality of men and movements in Christian history, to be loath to force this rich variety into pre-fashioned, conceptual molds, and yet to seek *logos* in *mythos*, reason in history, essence in existence. He has helped me to accept and to profit by the acceptance of the relativity not only of historical objects but, more, of the historical subject, the observer and interpreter.<sup>18</sup>

Having thus acknowledged his academic debt and announced his heuristic principle, Niebuhr proceeds to expand Troeltsch's threefold theory of the characteristic forms of religious expression into a fivefold one.

According to Niebuhr organized religion functions in a culture with which it has to live in symbiosis. The term "symbiosis," borrowed from biology, describes the intimate association in a common environment of two dissimilar living organisms. This association may be disadvantageous or destructive to one or both of the organisms, or may be advantageous or even necessary to one or both without being harmful to either. For Niebuhr, Christ and culture are the two dissimilar organisms which are trying to live together in a symbiotic relationship. Thus the plight of organized religion is not less complicated by the fact that while Christianity must continue its intimate relationship with cultural society in history, it must also maintain an even more intimate relationship with its God who transcends history. The nature and extent of involvement in the world, along with the character of the theology and the form of group life which arise therefrom, is important to Niebuhr in *Christ and Culture*. Utilizing a typological approach he has reduced the bewilderingly complicated problem to five possible relationships: Christ against culture, the Christ of culture, Christ above culture, Christ and culture in paradox, and Christ the transformer of culture. Each type implies a more or less unique sociological form of expression, and each is upheld by a constellation of appropriate beliefs and practices.

1. Since Christ is set over *against* culture in a radical manner by John I, Tertullian, and Tolstoi, it can be supposed not only that evil is resident in culture but also that culture itself is rejected largely as irredeemable. Reminiscent of Troeltsch's sect-type in extreme form, this first category

<sup>18</sup> *Christ and Culture*, Harper & Brothers, 1951, p. x.

encourages the individual to abandon the world and to "come out from among them and be separate." In the modern period occasionally Christian missionaries may require their converts to abandon well-nigh wholly the customs and institutions of so-called "heathen" societies. Some contemporary American cults found in rural areas and in the urban slum advocate this austere and extreme position. Niebuhr considers this form of religious expression as both necessary and inadequate. It properly maintains the distinction between Christ and Caesar to be sure, but it exhibits an astonishing naïveté respecting the individual's amenableness to culture. Even in prayer he utilizes the language of the nation and the cosmology of the culture. Though he takes the wings of the morning and flees to the uttermost parts of the world, behold, even there, he reveals his dependence upon culture.

2. When Christ is *within* culture, adherents feel no tension between the church and the world, between social laws and the gospel, between the workings of divine grace and human effort, between the ethics of salvation and the ethics of social conservation. Culture is interpreted through Christ, and Christ is understood through culture. Adherents are "once born," and that single natal event appears sufficient for both church and culture. The outcome is an association of religiously enlightened persons who can live easily in culture and feel at home there. The group is indifferent toward evangelism. Niebuhr labels the phenomena as "cultural Protestantism." As a religious entity this sounds very much like a description of Troeltsch's church-type. A closer examination of the group's proponents (the Gnostics, Abelard, and Ritschl) as specified by Niebuhr confirms the suspicion that this is indeed the complementary polar type of Weber, Troeltsch, and the Niebuhr of 1929.

3. In discussing Christ *above* culture, Niebuhr improvises the appellation "the church of the center." This is another way of describing the great majority movement in Christianity. It achieves a synthesis of Christ and culture. Each living organism is necessary to the fulfillment of the other in the symbiotic relationship. Such a conclusion is inescapable when it is discovered that a Christian must first of all become a good man according to the requirements of culture. Then, the individual brings the cultural qualification with him to the ecclesiastical altar. Because he is able and willing to satisfy the conditions in *both* spheres, he achieves a "double happiness," for he is now both in culture and in Christ. From this religious group is recruited Christians who provide willing and intelligent co-operation with nonbelievers in carrying on the work of the world. They accomplish this while maintaining a distinctive Christian view and life. Proponents

of this first mediating type or form of religious expression include Clement of Alexandria, Thomas Aquinas, and Joseph Butler. According to Niebuhr this group is located on the continuum midway between the sect and the church types of Troeltsch.

4. Dualism is the term applied to Christ and culture *in paradox*. This is Niebuhr's second mediating type. Here the individual lives in eternal conflict. But this is not a contest calling for a spectator's role. Rather it is a conflict between God and man, indeed between God and us. Here the clash between the righteousness of God and the righteousness of self takes place. Before the holiness of God none of the human or cultural distinctions between men hold: a philosopher and a simpleton stand upon equal ground. This of course comes more as a surprise to the former than to the latter. Law and grace, divine wrath and mercy, to the end remain intermingled. The double danger of absolutizing God out of reach of man and of relativizing culture out of reach of God into an antinomianism gives rise to the term "in paradox." Paul, Marcion, Luther, Kirkegaard, and Reinhold Niebuhr are identified with this type which is correctly placed on the continuum between the sect and the church, but somewhat nearer the latter.

5. Finally, Niebuhr treats the conversionist under the rubric, Christ *transforms* culture. Because all culture lies under the judgment of God, its redemption is achieved whenever Christ converts culture to God's purpose. Religion's main problem in the symbiotic relationship is culture's conversion. Because Christ is the transformer of human actions, there is no phase of culture over which he does not have dominion. Christ converts man *in* his culture. This affirmative attitude toward culture is found here, but it is always accompanied by a sensitivity to the possible perversion of society. The author of the Fourth Gospel, Augustine, and F. D. Maurice are chosen by the author for the discussion. Thus the third and last mediating form of Christian expression finds a place on the continuum between Troeltsch's sect and church types but closer to the former.

No doubt at this juncture the reader will have drawn the inference that Troeltsch apparently crossed the Atlantic Ocean safely and, by now, has penetrated American life and thought to some significant extent. Richard Niebuhr has made Troeltsch's concept almost a household word in the United States. But in the achievement he has placed a distinctive Niebuhrean stamp upon the German's idea. He introduced the notion of a continuum as well as the dynamic gravitation from sect to church. Further, he broadened the concept from three to five distinct types of Christian expression, thus making provision for a more adequate theological analysis



of the symbiotic relationship between Christ and culture. The addition of three mediating forms of Christian expression placed between the polar types of sect and church furnishes a more adequate concept for the inclusion of denominational phenomena so prevalent in American Protestantism. In final and devastating recapitulation, Niebuhr declares that "no single man or group or historical time is the church."<sup>19</sup> This acknowledgment of pluralism in the sociological expression of Christianity is a profound and useful insight despite its heuristic origin.

### III

It has already been pointed out that Niebuhr's elaboration of Troeltsch achieved widespread popularity among American scholars. The sociologists have found in Niebuhr fruitful hypotheses upon which to base manifold research projects. Of particular interest here is the utilization of the concepts by Morton Rubin in his book *Plantation County*.<sup>20</sup> Rubin begins with an acceptance of the basic idea of Niebuhr's *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*—i.e., a sect-church pattern of organization of the Christian fellowship. Further, he accepts the notion of a dynamic continuum connecting the two polar types. These hypotheses of course have been tested and affirmed by Pope, Yinger, Cayton, and others. Still further, Rubin accepts the viewpoint of Troeltsch, Niebuhr, and Pope—to wit that the sects are primarily a phenomenon of the lower classes and that the church type is identified with the upper classes. He agrees that when members of the sects improve their economic status, and thereby become upwardly mobile in the social class system, they carry the sect up through various primary changes in form of religious expression. Hence the notion that a sect "graduates" from its lower-class constituency.

Equipped with these assumptions, Rubin took Niebuhr's idea and tilted the dynamic continuum to form an inclined plane, which runs upward from the sect toward the church type. Then he correlated the sect and church idea with the tripartite class system (lower, middle, and upper) of *Plantation County*. The lower class claims the sect while the upper class espouses the church type. Between the polar extremes may be found the migrating sect which exchanges one sociological form of organization for another as it makes its way up the economic scale. The sect gradually loses its own distinctive characteristics and becomes more and more like a church. This generalization expands the Niebuhrean concept.

<sup>19</sup> *Christ and Culture*, p. 256.

<sup>20</sup> Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1951, pp. 133-51.

Rubin's viewpoint and findings can be noted from an inspection of the following typical quotations taken from his monograph:

The growth of sects in white society can be laid to the increased dissatisfaction of lower- and lower middle-class whites with their churches. The white Baptists and the Methodists have become denominations; sects have sprung up to protest their worldliness. . . .

While the various church groups each have their particular beliefs and rituals, in actual practice church membership is more conditioned by lineage, status, and marriage than by outright support of a particular theological system.<sup>21</sup>

This general finding appears also in the writings of Drake and Cayton, Joseph Fichter, Kaufman, Gustafsson, and many others. In short, Rubin has achieved an interesting extension of Niebuhr's concept. He has made explicit a point which remained implicit in the works of other scholars. He has correlated religious expression with social class.

Of particular interest here also is the recent investigation made by Russell R. Dynes<sup>22</sup> of Ohio State University. Though well acquainted with Weber, Troeltsch, and Niebuhr, Dynes took his specific sect-church typological orientation from Pope's book *Millhands and Preachers*.<sup>23</sup> It is a well-known fact that Pope relies heavily upon Niebuhr and Troeltsch, which he acknowledges readily and without embarrassment. Thus Dynes set up a research project in an attempt to quantify sect and church and "to ascertain their relationship to socio-economic status." The study was delimited to Protestantism and localized to metropolitan Columbus, Ohio.

Dynes' sophisticated and well-executed empirical study yielded two interesting findings. First, "Churchness is associated with high socio-economic status, and, conversely, that Sectness is associated with low socio-economic status. In other words, as education increases, emotionalism, evangelism, and other sectarian characteristics are increasingly rejected. An increase in occupational prestige . . . is associated with a greater acceptance of the more institutional and liturgical church." Or to put the matter quite another way, "Significant relationships were found between the acceptance of the sect type of organization and lower socio-economic status and between the acceptance of the Church type of organization and higher socio-economic status."<sup>24</sup> These findings indicate plainly to Dynes that the Weber, Troeltsch, Niebuhr, Pope church-sect typology correlates positively with

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 144, 137.

<sup>22</sup> "Church-Sect Typology and Socio-Economic Status," *American Sociological Review*, October, 1955, pp. 555 ff. See also his unpublished doctoral dissertation "Church-Sect Typology: An Empirical Study," Ohio State University, 1954.

<sup>23</sup> New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942.

<sup>24</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 559-60.



class structure in society. It supports the more general conclusions of Morton Rubin and points to the scholarly significance of the expanding literature in this area. Thus one takes cognizance of what appears to be the latest and perhaps most interesting ramification of Niebuhr's introduction of Troeltsch to America.

Perhaps this article can open for wider scholarly exploration the sociological forms of religious expression in Western Christianity. Such can and should be an interdisciplinary task. The present discussion of Troeltsch, H. R. Niebuhr, Rubin and Dynes provides an interesting starting point. Fortunately, this general substantive area is no longer exclusively the private domain of the philosopher, historian and theologian. Already such distinguished United States sociologists as Hollingshead, Kaufman, Havighurst, Warner, and the Lynds have been attracted to the area. Their published monographs and scholarly articles disclose more than a casual interest in the possible interrelationship between forms of religious expression and forms of social structure. From an evaluation of such materials, religion can presumably benefit. Consequently, as theologian and social scientist confer, one may observe the appearance of a new epoch of significance for Christian faith in its manifold expressions in the Western world.

### 3. *The Social Attitudes of American Methodists, 1919-1929*

ROBERT MOATS MILLER

WE OFTEN ASSUME that social Christianity declined (if it survived at all) in the decade following the First World War. Surely, it is said, the burning reform ardor of the great days of Rauschenbusch and Herron must have been smothered as clouds of contented complacency blanketed the American scene in the "roaring twenties." Could the churches retain their questing spirit and crusading zeal in the age of George F. Babbitt and Bruce Barton? The obvious answer, as given by many writers, is that they could not and did not. And yet, perhaps the social passion of American Protestantism was not as completely anesthetized in this decade of prosperity and conservatism as is generally believed. An examination of the record of American Methodism in the years 1919-1929 perhaps will help us assess the condition and status of social Christianity in the post-Versailles period—and it can be stated, further, that the Methodist record was not totally untypical of much of American Protestantism.

#### I

It is fitting to begin this discussion of the social attitudes of Methodism in the "roaring twenties" with the issues of war and peace. With the exception of a handful of pacifists, many of whom were also socialists, Methodists gave their blessing to the war effort in 1917-1918. They accepted the peace settlement with equal alacrity; few voices questioned the justice of the Treaty of Versailles. Methodism embraced the League of Nations as the greatest aspect of the Treaty, perhaps because it seemed to substantiate the purity of American motives and perhaps because it fulfilled a 1916 prewar demand for an association of nations.

In 1919 and again in 1920 the bishops of Northern Methodism pleaded for a "real and effective League in which the United States shall have a proper and honorable place," and the General Conference echoed this sentiment in a petition to President Wilson and the Senate. Further, in 1919 at least twenty-nine Northern annual conferences endorsed the League

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either with or without reservations, usually without, although by 1920 the number dwindled to nine. Ministers preached sermons, signed petitions, and co-operated with the Federal Council of Churches, the Church Peace Union, and the World Alliance for International Friendship Through the Churches in bringing pressure to bear on the Senate. One petition alone carried the names of 4,019 Methodist clergymen, North and South. Southern spokesmen such as Bishop John M. Moore were on record (the first post-war General Conference of Southern Methodism did not meet until 1922 and hence did not speak on the League fight), and Bishop Edwin Hughes declared he did not know of a single Northern minister who opposed the adoption of the League.

The Methodist press did its part. The *New York Christian Advocate*, commenting on the defeat of the League, suggested that America change its motto from "In God We Trust" to "Ourselves Alone." The *Northwestern Christian Advocate* termed the League the "most profoundly significant document ever penned by man" and held it was "destined to more profoundly affect the course of human history than any one act since the sacrifice of Christ." "Blind fatuity," "blatant selfishness," "partisan narrowness," were some of the terms used by the *Nashville Christian Advocate* to characterize opponents of the League.

It sometimes stated that with the rejection of the Treaty of Versailles the United States turned its back on the world and retreated into a shell of isolation. Whatever truth this thesis has for America as a whole, it does not jibe with the record of Methodism.

This conclusion is illustrated, in the first place, by the fact that Methodists did not push the League completely from their thoughts. The 1924 and 1928 General Conference of Northern Methodism urged American participation. From time to time this position was assumed by annual conferences and Methodist agencies. Southern Methodism, in 1922 and 1926 General Conference committee reports, expressed approval of the League. Church journals continued to support the organization, although these echoes of the intense 1919-1920 pro-League sentiment were often faint.

Although the League was not ignored, equal hope was placed in the World Court. The 1924 and 1928 General Conferences of Northern Methodism, through Episcopal Addresses, committee reports, and resolutions, gave "heartily endorsement" to American entry—and this conviction was transmitted to the Senate in blunt language. The 1926 General Conference of Southern Methodism adopted a favorable report, and in 1924 South-

ern Methodists expressed disgust that proposals for American membership had been "relegated to the innocuous desuetude of a Senate committee pigeon-hole." The Methodist press requested membership. Said one editor: "The World Court represents the most important effort yet made in all the history of the world to substitute legal machinery for brute force, to substitute law for war." Methodists also participated in World Court Week and World Court Sunday, preached sermons on the subject, and co-operated with the Federal Council of Churches in meeting with government leaders.

Enthusiasm was engendered also by the Pact of Paris. The 1928 General Conference of Northern Methodism, in resolutions and the Episcopal Address, heralded the negotiations leading to the Pact. And well it might, for Northern Methodism had been extremely active in the movement to renounce war. A host of annual conferences had supported the idea. The Methodist World Peace Commission circulated a petition and secured ninety thousand signatures urging ratification of the Pact. As early as 1924 the General Conference, in a detailed maneuver, checked the attitude of every candidate for Congress toward outlawry, the political threat in this action being obvious. The bishops of Southern Methodism praised the agreement, and the Southern General Conference was informed that the "declaration in the Briand-Kellogg Treaty is shot through with the light that shone in Bethlehem."

Methodists further believed permanent peace was impossible so long as nations prepared for war. Hence the cause of disarmament was very close to the hearts of the churches, and hence also the General Conferences of both Northern and Southern Methodism rejoiced in the Washington Conference, just as the Northern meeting of 1920 had urged the calling of a disarmament gathering in the first instance. Further, in 1921 at least thirty-six annual conferences in the North alone endorsed the idea of a disarmament conclave. In the spring of 1921 a petition urging the President to call an international disarmament conference was signed by 4,950 Northern Methodist ministers and by 1,500 Southern Methodist clergymen. Methodists, along with other denominations, observed June 5, 1921, as Reduction of Armament Sunday, and Sunday, November 6, was set aside as a day of prayer for the delegates meeting in Washington. Sermons were preached, pamphlets published, meetings held, and officials button-holed, all to the end that the conference might succeed. *Zions Herald* knew that with the conference the "final establishment of the kingdom of God on earth draws nearer," and other Methodist editors concurred.

Not only did Methodists specifically endorse the Washington Con-

ference, they repeatedly urged drastic reduction of armaments and opposed any step that hinted of "militarism," and especially is this true of Northern Methodists. For example, the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church called for the reduction of military expenditures, scotched talk of war with Mexico, resolved against military training in schools, petitioned the government to halt its proposed cruiser-building program, and requested exemption be granted to Methodist conscientious objectors. These attitudes were echoed by official agencies (including a peace commission specifically authorized by the Conference to "create a will to peace"), by annual conferences, and by leading ministers and papers. Southern Methodists spoke in a much less certain voice, and yet they too from time to time warned against the dangers of militarism.

The intense interest shown by Methodists in disarmament is explainable only in terms of the powerful antiwar sentiment that swept the churches in the post-Versailles years. The disillusionment of Methodism, however, did not take the form of resurgent isolationism. Popular opinion to the contrary, Methodists believed that America must actively participate in world affairs, for the only way to keep the United States out of war was to keep war out of the world.

Hence a significant element within Methodism pointed out the dangers of blustering nationalism and selfish isolationism. A minority of Methodists, but including some of the most distinguished leaders, assumed a pacifist posture, and it must be remembered that in the twenties pacifism and isolationism were poles apart. To be sure, important elements—especially in the South—still believed in adequate defensive preparations and shunned debilitating pacifism. And yet, by the late twenties much of American Methodism displayed an attitude indistinguishable from that of the historic peace churches. Methodists threw themselves into the peace crusade with high hope and a noble if often naïve zeal, and for a glorious moment in the "golden twenties" it seemed in truth that war had been outlawed, not only in a legal sense but in the hearts and minds of men as well.

It is fashionable to chide the clerical peacemakers for their lack of realism. Surely they overestimated the economic causes of war and underestimated the irrationality of national pride. Too often Methodist churchmen viewed disarmament as an end in itself, failing to recognize that war preparations were merely symptomatic of deeper, less reconcilable tensions. Many churchmen in the twenties appeared unaware that adherence to the principles of world co-operation involved the risk and perhaps the ultimate payment of the high price of war. In the twenties Methodism sought

justice and peace. The thirties showed that in an age of Stalin and Hitler it might be necessary to sacrifice peace to attain justice. In short, few spokesmen assessed the priority Christians would one day be forced to accord to the ideals of justice on the one hand and the war that might be necessary to secure that relative justice on the other.

But it would be unfair to conclude on this gloomy note. In the years after Versailles American Methodists actively called for the participation of their nation in world affairs. They made a noble effort toward world peace, and the fact that the effort failed does not mean the attempt was ill-considered.

## II

The inquiry now turns to the subject of civil liberties, and of all the violations of this precious heritage lynching was the most flagrant. Methodists fought the good fight to end this evil. To begin with, Northern Methodists in their General Conferences of 1920, 1924, and 1928, through resolutions, committee reports, and Episcopal Addresses, flayed the abuse. These statements were not couched in generalities. Both major parties were petitioned to write antilynching planks into their platforms. Federal regulation was urged repeatedly, including specific approval of the Dyer bill. After all, as one resolution stated, Methodists have through the federal government opposed whisky, so also through the government should they oppose lynching. As early as 1919 the Freedmen's Aid Society requested federal antilynching legislation. Southern Methodists also condemned the evil, although the General Conference did not go on record favoring federal action. Annual conferences in both the North and South refused to remain silent. The *Nashville Christian Advocate* spoke as bluntly as any journal in the South, even endorsing federal action.

A discussion of the attitudes of American Methodists toward civil liberties would be incomplete without some reference, however brief, to the revived Ku Klux Klan—an organization dedicated to the proposition that all good men are created white, Protestant, and native born. It is clear that many Methodist laymen joined the Klan; equally apparent is the fact that Methodist clergymen gave it aid and comfort, perhaps quieting their consciences with the words from the old hymn, "God moves in a mysterious way."

Perhaps, however, certain points need to be emphasized, if for no other reason than that they have been rather neglected by historians. The observations that follow are less in the nature of a dissenting opinion than of a modifying report.



In the first place, it seems apparent that if Methodism and the Klan had worked hand-in-glove, the church press would have supported this alliance or at least remained judiciously silent. Such was not the case. The *Northwestern Christian Advocate* termed the Klan an abnormal and vicious organization. The Klan, according to the *New York Christian Advocate*, was neither Christian nor American. Ministers approached by the bed-sheeted patriots with bribes of money should cry, "Thy money perish with thee." The fact is, the editors considered "The K.K.K. No Per Cent American." It was a "group which hides its very face from the light of day, and pursues its ends by the method of the mask, the black hand, and the poison pen." The *Nashville Christian Advocate* devoted less space to the Klan, yet several contributors damned the group and the editors said, "We sincerely trust that there may be found in the South only a few who have any sympathy whatever with the revived Ku Klux organizations." The *North Carolina, Western, and Pacific Christian Advocates* and *Zions Herald* warned against the Klan; the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate* (Atlanta) could not believe that "any considerable number of our people will identify secret methods, sectionalism, partisanship, and racial hatred with American democracy," and admonished its readers to resist the "un-American and undemocratic order." Even the conservative *Arkansas Methodist*, while not always disapproving of the Klan's aims, condemned its methods as dangerous, saying "let us have none of it." Perhaps the Methodist press could have spoken more frequently and bluntly, but a rather close investigation does not reveal a single endorsement of the Klan in Methodist journals.

Secondly, what was the record of the General Conferences? The Episcopal Address to the Northern Conference of 1924 termed secret, masked organizations a menace to society. At the same meeting E. Stanley Jones introduced a resolution deploring Klanlike groups, and the next quadrennium again saw the bishops striking a not-too-veiled blow. The Social Service Commission of Southern Methodism passed a resolution condemning the demonstrations of masked and hooded men.

Finally, in the Klan fight were all Methodist ministers sunshine saints and summer parsons, or did a few have the courage to speak out? As early as 1921 a Southern Methodist official called the Klan "dangerous," "vicious," "evil," a "leprous social disease" producing only "deceit, delusions, hopelessness, anarchy, and cruelty." Ralph Sockman was convinced that all enlightened Protestants would repudiate the Klan. Bishop William Anderson said the Klan was built upon unchristian and un-American prin-



ciples, while Bishop Luther Wilson used exactly the same terms. When Bishop Francis J. McConnell was interrupted while addressing a church conference by the entrance of nine hooded knights, he declined the offered envelope and unceremoniously—like a good Methodist—showed them the door. The Reverends Ralph Urmay and Clyde Nevins of Pittsburgh also drove some coin-proffering Kluxers from their temples. Bishop W. F. McMurray, Southern Methodist of Saint Louis, punched one of his ministers in the mouth for boosting the Klan. Bishop Edwin Mouzon, one of the greatest Southern leaders, said of the Klan: "It is more than unsafe; it is dangerous." Bishop W. P. Thirkield and Bishop Leete called the Klan a menace, and Bishop Edwin Hughes declared it idiotic with its claims of Nordic superiority. "It is not Anglo-Saxon blood," Hughes declared, "but the blood of Jesus Christ that has made us what we are." L. H. Hough concurred.

An obscure Methodist parson in Carrsville, Kentucky, perhaps spoke for many unremembered clergymen when he wrote in a private letter to a friend in Texas: "I have been minister and teacher for more than 40 years, and have always opposed all organizations whose slogan was 'to hate somebody.' I shall not approve such, nor their meddling in my church affairs, whether they want me to persecute Jews and Catholics, or whether they ask me to fight Swedes and Baptists."

Happily, Methodists were not seriously racked by the fundamentalist-modernist controversy that absorbed the energies of much of American Protestantism in the twenties, and official Methodism did not endorse anti-evolution legislation. This is not to say, of course, that the ranks of those who supported proscriptive legislation were free from Methodist recruits. For instance the *Arkansas Methodist* endorsed an anti-evolution bill in the razorback state, and Methodist laymen were the most numerous members of the Tennessee legislature which passed that state's infamous law.

However, a host of Methodist leaders and papers, too numerous to cite here, championed the cause of academic freedom.

Still another aspect of civil liberties in the twenties involved the ordeal of Sacco and Vanzetti. This case laid bare the intolerance and fear lurking beneath the placid surface of "normalcy," but it is also a tribute to the sensitivity of the American conscience. Although the Methodist General Conferences did not act, both the New York East and the New England annual conferences passed resolutions urging Governor Fuller to secure an impartial review of the case. The Methodist Federation for Social

Service, consistently refusing to sell its soul for a mess of patronage, intervened actively on behalf of the accused. McConnell and Luccock signed a petition urging commutation of sentence. Another petition designed to prevent the chair from claiming its victims was endorsed by Bishop William Anderson and by 135 teachers and students at the Boston University School of Theology. Here and there, in Boston and Chicago, for example, Methodist ministers preached sermons on this alleged miscarriage of justice. Worth M. Tippy and Harry F. Ward were on record. Several Methodist journals sympathized with the "good shoemaker and the poor fish peddler."

From time to time Methodist annual conferences, leaders, agencies, and papers befriended other alleged victims of vengeance rather than vigilance—Tom Mooney, the Centralia Wobblies, and the political prisoners of 1917-1918.

The most serious threat to civil liberties in the United States came during the immediate postwar months when the nation, hag-ridden by the specter of Bolshevism, suffered a failure of nerve. Many Methodist spokesmen and journals, including those of generally liberal persuasion, trembled along with other citizens. The record should show, however, that in 1920 the Northern bishops counseled calmness and that Bishop Williams believed the deportations marked the "foulest page in American history." The Federation for Social Service stood like a rock, as it had to since the waves of hysteria were eroding its own reputation. A Methodist minister, Constantine Panunzio, wrote the sanest and most critical study ever made of the deportation cases. Tippy, Sockman, McConnell, Ward, Frank Mason North were a few of the famous Methodists who kept their heads and publicly urged the country to do likewise. Methodist editors occasionally protested the "deportations delirium," especially as the year 1920 deepened.

The record of American Methodism on civil liberties is not unspotted. Balancing exception against exception, however, Methodists in the twenties may be proud of their defense of this precious heritage. In the final analysis, they believed in a society in which a man could believe as his conscience dictated.

### III

Among the most crucial issues facing the American people in the twenties was that of race relations. Racial pride threatened to cut the heart out of the Christian ethic as well as out of the American Dream. The clause in the immigration act of 1924 providing for the total exclusion of Japanese illustrates the senseless folly of this form of paganism. Happily, Northern Methodists were not unaware of the contradictions between the act and the

Christian ideal of brotherhood. Their 1924 General Conference adopted a two-page resolution criticizing the exclusion act and mailed copies to every congressman. The Episcopal Address of 1928 termed the bill an "utter perversion" of both Christian and American standards deserving "unmeasured condemnation." "The Japanese exclusion measure was about the worst piece of blundering at Washington in many a day," growled *Zions Herald*, reflecting the general attitude of the Methodist press. However many Methodists—and certainly a majority in the South—favored a general tightening of immigration standards.

Anti-Semitism was a second aspect of the race relations problem of the twenties. Fortunately there was considerable Methodist condemnation of this evil. To cite only one example, when Henry Ford's *Dearborn Independent* published the "Protocols of Zion," documents as slanderous to the Jewish people as they were spurious, the New York, Northwestern, and Nashville *Christian Advocates* and *Zions Herald* all termed the "Protocols" pure "humbuggery" and added that their appearance in Ford's paper was no credit to his "bump of credulity."

More far reaching was prejudice against the Negro. Historically Methodists had performed important work in the fields of Negro health and education, but the giving of alms from one's pocket does not excuse racial pride in one's heart, and in the twenties the Methodist churches were generally segregated and segregating institutions. But there is some evidence to indicate the Methodist conscience was troubled.

The Episcopal Address to Northern Methodism in 1920 and 1924 warned against racial pride. The 1924 General Conference rejected "as unchristian and untrue the idea that certain races are born to inherent and fixed superiority and rulership, while others are born to inherent and fixed inferiority and subordination. We stand for the life of open opportunity for all." In 1926 the Board of Bishops agreed not to attend segregated meetings, after an incident that had embarrassed the Negro bishops. The 1928 General Conference reaffirmed the oneness of humanity and called for equal opportunity for all. A second statement requested the elimination of racial discrimination in the land. The Northern Methodist press took a rather outspoken stand; certainly the racial attitudes of these journals were in advance of the general line held by white Protestants. The record of the Methodist Federation for Social Service was unmarred by either equivocation or paternalism. Many Methodist leaders believed it was necessary to be their brother's brother and not merely their brother's keeper. It was to be only a short time—1932—before Ernest Fremont Tittle was to intro-

duce his magnificent resolution placing a period to segregation at General Conference meetings.

And what of Southern Methodists? In 1919 the Committee on Temperance and Social Service called for co-operation and helpfulness between the races and cautioned whites to accept the childlike infirmities of the Negro with tolerance. By 1922 the tone had become less patronizing. The Episcopal Address of that year observed the great strides made by the freedmen since emancipation and asked that they be accorded justice "where their lawful rights are concerned." A report adopted at this Conference sought the solution to racial injustice by the application of "Christian principles." In 1926 Southern Methodists held Christ's teachings concerning human brotherhood required equal justice and opportunity for all regardless of race or color. From time to time Southern Methodist leaders and local groups displayed a tolerant attitude. The record of the *Nashville Christian Advocate* was as enlightened as that of any church journal in the South.

With only a few exceptions, however, Southern Methodists—and probably most Northern Methodists also—believed justice to the Negro could be achieved within the framework of a segregated society. Few Methodists were willing to go the last mile, although that few included some of the most important leaders. Surely it is not unfair to conclude that the giant strides made by the churches in later years in the area of race relations owe something to the timid, faltering steps taken in the twenties.<sup>1</sup>

#### IV

The condition and status of the laborer was one of the gravest problems facing American society in the twenties, and a study of the social attitudes of Methodism must inquire into the extent that Methodists were occupied with circumstances in mine and mill, field and factory.

In 1908 the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church adopted the famous "Social Creed of Methodism," which served as the basis for the Federal Council's "Social Creed of the Churches." Thus as early as the second administration of Theodore Roosevelt the Methodist Episcopal Church officially stood for a minimum living wage and the

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted, incidentally, that the race question was an important stumbling block to Methodist unification. Scores of Southern Methodists, including such leaders as Bishops Candler and Ainsworth, made clear their reluctance to accept any merger that would bring them into familiar contact with "people of color." As one spokesman asked, "Shall we Negroize the Southern Methodist Church?" At the other extreme were those who believed the eventual compromise of 1939 an accommodation to racial pride—Ernest Fremont Tittle, the New York East Conference, *Zions Herald*, and the National Council of Methodist Youth, to mention a few examples of those who believed the color line in Methodism should be completely erased.

highest wage each industry can afford, a maximum six-day week, protection of working women and the abolition of child labor, and industrial safeguards. Additional statements on social security and collective bargaining were subsequently added to the creed, and in 1920 it was reaffirmed.

In 1920 the bishops called for the churches to stand like the prophets of the Old Testament, like the apostles of the New Testament, and like the Lord of both in unflinching denunciation of all injustice in economic life. And these injustices were specifically named. They were many. Four years later the General Conference called once again not merely for the physical conditions which will make for the Christianization of industry—for a living wage and for all possible safeguards for health and security—but also for the higher prerequisites for sound human existence, for the recognition of labor's right to organize, for the laborer's right to be heard through representatives of his own choosing, and for an increasing share of responsibility by labor in the control of industry.

The Episcopal Address of 1928 asked that workers be safeguarded in hazardous industries, and for a wage capable of not merely prolonging existence but of supporting life. "It does not satisfy the requirement," concluded the address, "if there be given to the toiler today only so much as shall enable him to resume his toil tomorrow." In addition, the bishops upheld reasonable provisions for the days of illness and old age. Labor's right to organize was specifically recognized. The General Conference of that year endorsed again the "Social Creed of Methodism" and then proceeded to adopt and order printed into the *Discipline* a long statement containing a dozen specific reforms which should be accorded to labor.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, adopted as its own the "Social Creed," and beginning with 1918 this was printed in the *Discipline*. The 1922 General Conference, both in committee reports and in the episcopal address, urged that the industrial classes be given, not charity or toleration, but a righteous compensation. At the next quadrennial Conference the bishops upheld the right of all men and women to a living wage, limited hours of work, a larger participation in the fruits of industry, better medical care, more parks and playgrounds, greater opportunity for self-culture and development—in short, whatever makes for a richer, fuller life.

From time to time annual conferences deplored the injustices suffered by the laborer and farmer and requested reforms. The Methodist press was rather sympathetic to the workers, and a few journals such as *Zions Herald* were vigorously pro-labor by the end of the decade.

Methodism gave further witness to its concern for the laboring man



through the unofficial Methodist Federation for Social Service. This group championed the eight-hour day, minimum wage laws, social security, safer conditions, and the right of labor to organize and bargain collectively. Throughout the twenties the Federation challenged the accepted thesis that the entire country was basking in golden prosperity. It served as the conscience of Methodism, refusing to believe that there were no conditions about which to be conscience stricken. Time and again the troubled state of American farmers, miners, textile hands, and factory workers were exposed. Numerous conferences, national and local, were held with business and labor leaders to the end that greater economic justice might be secured. The Federation investigated many strikes, almost invariably reporting that the grievances of the workers were real. Management's use of spies, company police, injunctions, and "yellow dog" contracts were all deprecated. Let it be flatly stated that the group's support of labor was without equivocation. The later misadventures of the Federation must not obscure its real contribution to social justice in the twenties.

It might be added that Methodists were instrumental in the ending of the twelve-hour day in the steel industry. Fred Fisher (later Bishop Fisher) was director of the Interchurch World Movement's Industrial Relations Department which instituted an inquiry into the great steel strike of 1919. Bishop McConnell headed the Commission of Inquiry and was responsible for the publication of the famous *Report on the Steel Strike of 1919*, which contained a devastating indictment of the twelve-hour day. Despite intense pressure, these leaders, backed by the Methodist press, stood firm.

Eight years later in the South forty-one church leaders, including such Methodist spokesmen as Bishop James Cannon, Jr., issued a vigorous criticism of textile mill conditions. A storm of abuse was unleashed upon the heads of the churchmen for meddling in "secular" matters, but they stuck by their guns. It is interesting to find Bishop Cannon, favorite whipping boy of many "liberals," bravely defending the "Appeal" and refusing to retreat an inch.

An examination of the attitude of Methodists toward strikes is essential to a true understanding of their attitude toward labor in general. During the strife-filled years immediately following the war most Methodists, North and South, believed the major strikes unjustified and Bolshevik-inspired. True, a few spokesmen defended the strikes, but generally in 1919 and 1920 sympathy for labor was not transferred to specific strike situations.



As the twenties deepened, however, Methodists came increasingly to the recognition that labor might on occasion be driven to its supreme weapon. Lawrence in '22, Passaic in '26, New Bedford in '28, Gastonia in '29—the several railroad and coal strikes of the decade—found a significant number of Methodist leaders, agencies, and journals siding with the workers. In all truth, Methodist sympathy for labor in specific strike situations increased rather than declined in the “roaring twenties.”

To sum up, labor's charge that the churches were the tools of the business community does not, on the whole, apply to American Methodism. In any event Methodists in the “conservative and corpulent” twenties gave ample support to labor in all of its legitimate demands; indeed, it is difficult not to conclude that American Methodism traveled more than half way in attempting to achieve a *rapprochement* with labor.

## V

Finally, how did Methodists view the contending merits of capitalism and collectivism? There is considerable evidence to indicate that Methodists believed the United States had solved the central problems of civilization and that there was precious little that required reformation. Methodists, as other Protestants, succumbed to the materialistic standards of the decade and accepted the techniques and goals of the business community. In some instances huckstering methods were employed to increase memberships, for the size of a church often came to be the sole standard of success. As Henry Sloane Coffin warned, some ministers of the larger churches ceased to be shepherds and became ranchers. For an *element* in Methodism this was the “Age of the Babbittonian Captivity.”

Methodists not only adopted the techniques of the business world, they also lavishly praised the largely business-dominated presidencies of Harding and Coolidge. Indeed, aside from the scandals there simply was not much specific criticism of the Republican administrations of the twenties. Certainly many Methodists viewed collectivist notions dimly. This contentment with the *status quo* partially explains the criticism directed by conservative Methodists at their own liberal leaders, agencies, and journals.

Having noted this strong current of conservative thought, it still remains true that social Christianity lived on within the Methodist fold, especially in the North. From time to time Methodist agencies, leaders, and journals lanced the festering sores on the American body politic and questioned the basic premises of unfettered capitalism. The “profit motive” was repeatedly denounced. Further, a rather surprising amount of evidence

exists indicating Methodist sympathy with the so-called "great experiment" in Soviet Russia. In fact and contrary to popular opinion, several Methodist leaders and papers were more friendly toward Communist Russia in the "reactionary" twenties than in the "radical" thirties. It is quite clear that American Methodism contained more sentiment critical of capitalism than any other major denomination.

## VI

American Methodism, true to its traditions, was deeply concerned with the fundamental problems facing the United States in the decade following the First World War. Methodists had never divorced themselves from the main stream of American life, and in the twenties they continued to display an interest in the structure and functioning of society. Steeped in a pietistic and individualistic ethic, Methodism might well have been expected to champion a "hands off" policy in regard to social matters. But Wesley's followers possessed a warm evangelical fervor, freedom of individual witness which left them relatively unembarrassed by theological quarrels, efficient administrative organization, and a puritan conscience that concentrated on social as well as personal morals. Further, and perhaps partially through chance, the leaders of Methodism were an unusually able and liberal group. To be sure, Northern Methodists displayed greater social consciousness than their Southern brethren, but it is further true that Southern Methodists were more socially passionate than their Presbyterian or Baptist friends below the Potomac.

Thus it was that Methodists—perhaps with naïveté—sought to end war, upheld civil liberties, attacked (on occasion) racial pride, defended labor, and exposed the abuses of unfettered capitalism. An examination of the sources reveals that social Christianity within American Methodism did not decline in the "roaring twenties." On the contrary, the social passion of Methodists remained vital, warm, and determined in the years 1919-1929.

## 4. *Toward a Christian Social Ethic and Action*

CHARLES W. FISHER

THE CORRELATION of the deep insights of the Christian faith with the experiences of life has been an age-long struggle. Our problem today is the development and application of a Christian social ethic adequate to these insights and adequate at the same time to social action in twentieth-century history. Its application will certainly mean the investigation of social institutions. A social institution is a concept which finds its implementation in a social structure, often an administrative structure. Accordingly, social ethics includes the investigation of social institutions to determine their concepts, aims, goals, and purposes, as well as the structure used in implementing them. These are then evaluated in the light of the Christian ethical standards. And the evaluation is not to be taken lightly, for it is always necessary to consider the effect of society on Christianity as well as of Christianity on society. Social ethics will also beware of the pitfall of becoming merely an advocate of some particular nostrum for the solution of various economic and social evils.

As a field of study, Christian social ethics defies confinement within any of the usual categories; it embraces material from theology, ethics, economics, sociology, social psychology, anthropology, and political science. Problems such as Christianity and the church in relation to race, economic life, freedom and order and the clash of political ideals, vocation, rural and urban issues are crucial today. Hence many are struggling to bring "good news" toward their solution, while many others are struggling to escape this responsibility.

It is not unusual to find men facing the problems of the day and interpreting them with a Christian bias. Indeed much of the great theology of the church has emerged from the minds of men who were grappling with the social issues of their time: Amos and Jeremiah in the Old Testament, Jesus and Peter and Paul in the New Testament, Augustine and Luther, Aquinas and Calvin. The theology of each was developed in relation to the problems of his day. Mr. Dickinson's essay in this symposium points

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out that the theologies of Walter Rauschenbusch and of Reinhold Niebuhr are similarly children of their respective social experiences.

It is axiomatic that each generation has in its social heritage the responsibility of passing on the culture, perhaps with modifications, to the next generation. It is the further task of the responsible Christian and of the church not only to pass *on* the culture but also to *pass* on the culture, applying as much corrective as their insight and intelligent positive methods and skills will permit. This function finds threefold expression: sociologically, in the realm of normative ideals and ethics, and in social action.

### I. CONVERGENCE OF RELIGION AND SOCIOLOGY

Modern sociology, as a descriptive science, gives us many insights into our culture and into our religion. These are essential in understanding both society and religion. We are concerned with a Christian social ethic. Let us see some of the widely varying viewpoints of sociologists from Emile Durkheim to H. Richard Niebuhr.

Emile Durkheim, who was among the earlier sociologists, noted that religion has given birth to all that is essential in society. But he goes on to say that religion is a mere product or function or expression of society. "The fundamental categories of thought, and consequently of science, are of religious origin. . . .", says Durkheim, "Nearly all the great social institutions have been born in religion . . . the religious life [is] the eminent form and, as it were, the concentrated expression of the whole collective life."<sup>1</sup> Thus he derives religion from society, which he terms the "soul" of religion.

There are others writing of the social function of religion who exhibit a tendency to reduce religion to a *function* of society rather than recognizing it as a *root* of society. Charles A. Ellwood, Lester Ward, E. A. Ross, and John L. Gillin are among these. Ellwood regarded religion as one of the most important instruments in the social control of man and society. This great controlling factor must not be weakened or man will regress to primitive and antisocial forms of behavior.<sup>2</sup>

Ernst Troeltsch was among the first to protest against this type of one-sided approach, as Dr. Shippey has indicated in his article. A more contemporary protest is found in Joachim Wach,<sup>3</sup> who pointed out that scholars tend to forget that however far-reaching the influence of social

<sup>1</sup> Durkheim, E., *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, tr. by Swain, The Macmillan Company, 1915, pp. 418 ff. *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> Ellwood, C. A., *The Reconstruction of Religion*, The Macmillan Company, 1923, pp. 1-11.

<sup>3</sup> Wach, J., *Sociology of Religion*, University of Chicago Press, 1945, Chap. 1.

motives on religion has been, the influences emanating from religion and reacting on the social structure have been equally great.

Troeltsch, H. Richard Niebuhr, Liston Pope, Wach, J. Milton Yinger and others use the method of typology, which may be briefly characterized as a descriptive study of religious groupings and correlated social phenomena. Wach differs from the others listed above in that he did not limit his study to one religion. Modern sociology is descriptive, and hence differs from social philosophy and social ethics which are both descriptive and normative. The latter use the data of sociology along with other data in making their evaluations.

H. Richard Niebuhr has developed the thesis that "Christ and Culture" live in symbiosis. They mutually influence one another, yet are dissimilar and in constant tension with each other. Religious groups make sociological responses designed either to escape or to resolve this tension. On the one hand the Dukhobors, Dunkards, Amish, and Hutterian Brethren have tried to withdraw from existing culture. In effect they have said, "Let Caesar have the world, but we are going to render unto God what is his." On the other hand there are others who sincerely ask, "Is there anything that belongs to Caesar, that does not ultimately belong to God?"

Troeltsch noted that from the beginning Christianity has found its expression in sect-type, church-type, and mysticism. Dr. Shippey has presented a discussion of this along with H. Richard Niebuhr's *Social Sources of Denominationalism* and his more recent *Christ and Culture*. Three things further need to be said:

*First.* We should not assume too much. Niebuhr points out that the divisions of the churches closely follow the division of men into economic, national, and ethnic groups. Further he conceives of a continuum connecting the polar types of sect and church in a one-way mobility from sect to church. It should not be assumed, however, that as the upward movement occurs the same people are moving along with it. The economic level advances and the group moves toward the church pole, but it is not necessarily because the same people have become more prosperous. Liston Pope's study of Gaston County<sup>4</sup> indicates that as a sect gains adherents and a promise of success, it begins to attract other adherents and to reach out toward greater influence in society. In Gaston County the percentage of mill workers decreased as the church advanced in economic status. As the movement has advanced, additional millhands have not been attracted to it. Furthermore some of those originally a part of it are no longer so. Thus there still exists a group

<sup>4</sup> Pope, L., *Millhands and Preachers*, Yale University Press, 1942, p. 119.



which will not be reached except by another sect. Hence it should not be assumed that the "socially disinherited" advance with the church. Neither should it be assumed that the beginning sect groups never attract people of high status to their leadership. The presence of Zinzendorf and William Penn in the leadership of the early Moravian and Quaker movements refutes this.

*Second.* Nothing has been said about a sect *within* a church. Ideally the sect exists within the parent body or church as a protesting and corrective influence; thus the sect does not do all of the accommodating, for the church itself is called back to the Christian ethic, and there is a purifying of the ecclesiastical institution. Francis of Assisi founded a sect within the framework of the Roman Catholic Church which during his lifetime was a genuine corrective influence, exhibiting a preponderance of the characteristics of a sect. The Methodist Federation for Social Action, to which reference is made in Dr. Miller's article on the social attitudes of American Methodists in the twenties, was a voluntary sect group within the framework of the Methodist Church.

Walter Rauschenbusch, whom Mr. Dickinson has compared with Reinhold Niebuhr, along with a small group of Baptist ministers organized the Brotherhood of the Kingdom in 1892. This became a sect within several Protestant denominations. It saw the Church of Christ divided by selfishness and jealousies. External forms were seen to be holding the center of attention while the spiritual life was neglected and people were estranged from the church. Indeed, the church was not even noticing the movements of the people. Aberrations from creeds were severely censured, but aberrations from the Christian spirit of self-sacrifice were tolerated. The Brotherhood viewed these conditions as directly deriving from abandonment of the concept of the Kingdom of God, which is the key to the teaching and work of Christ. The notion of individual salvation had been substituted by the churches for the collective idea of the Kingdom of God on earth. The purpose of the Brotherhood of the Kingdom was to make the idea of God central in Christianity, "to re-establish this idea in the thought of the church, and to assist in its practical realization in the world."<sup>5</sup>

In a similar manner Reinhold Niebuhr became an influential voice in founding a sect within the churches. Organized in 1930 as the Fellowship of Socialist Christians, it became known from 1947 to 1951 as the Frontier Fellowship. In 1951 the Frontier Fellowship was incorporated in a more

<sup>5</sup> Rauschenbusch, W., "The Brotherhood of the Kingdom," a pamphlet, quoted in Dombrowski, James, *The Early Days of Christian Socialism in America*, Columbia University Press, 1936, p. 107.



comprehensive organization known as Christian Action, which publishes a journal called *Christianity and Society*.

*Third.* H. Richard Niebuhr's typology in *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* is helpful in understanding the problems as Christianity seeks to maintain an intimate relationship with cultural society in present history and also seeks to maintain a very close relationship with its God who is immanent in and yet transcends history. The nature of this involvement and the accompanying character of theology and form of group life is analyzed in his typology in *Christ and Culture*. This work is very valuable in orienting our thought as we seek to develop a Christian social ethic. It should be noted, however, that a typological construct is not all-inclusive, and many personalities, ideas, and social structures defy typing or categorizing. Rauschenbusch, for example, is placed in the category, "The Christ of Culture." Yet there is also reason to consider him as in the "Christ Transforms Culture" type. Descriptive sociological analysis will always be helpful, but will probably never be historically adequate, as Dr. Niebuhr himself recognizes.<sup>6</sup>

## II. NORMATIVE IDEALS AND ETHICS

The church has frequently been embarrassed by itself, for in attempting to influence society it discovers it has been influenced by society. We are embarrassed because we discover one attitude regarding the importance of the Negro in Africa and often another attitude regarding his importance closer home. Similar inconsistencies can be found in other areas of social interaction.

Why are social and ethical teachings and practices of the church contradictory and confusing? Some writers say it is because religion is merely reflecting the confusion and ambiguity in the beliefs about what is right which are found in our culture. Religion is confused because the world is confused! Yet, as we have seen, religion also exerts a creative influence in the culture of the time. Dr. Miller's study of social attitudes of American Methodists during a period of laissez-faire complacency demonstrates that it is possible for a church or a segment of a church to rise above the social milieu sufficiently to speak prophetically if not always effectively. There is as much reason to consider religion a root of society as a product or function of society. And a root has a creative function to perform!

The particular expression of this function is dependent in part upon basic concepts such as God and historical process, man, society, the Kingdom

<sup>6</sup> Niebuhr, H. R., *Christ and Culture*, Harper & Brothers, 1951, p. 44.

of God and the Church, love and justice. It is not possible in this brief article to discuss anything in detail, much less these theological assumptions. It is possible to indicate some of the general dimensions. A few pointed questions will stimulate thought and indicate something of the scope:

*God.* God created the world and all we who dwell therein. Is he still at work in the world? And among his creatures? If so, to what extent? And is he working for good or evil? If he is a good God, as all Christian teachings indicate, then is he strong enough and persistent enough to make his goodness effective over evil? Or as Edgar S. Brightman used to ask, "Is God stronger than the devil?" If so, then the familiar words, "though the wrong seem oft so strong//God is the ruler yet" have meaning.

*Progress.* If God is still the ruler, and if he is working among his creatures for good, then is there not reason to believe progress is possible even in history? Can a person really believe in a God who is not immoral, and hold that God has doomed man to slavery, suffering, and all manner of frustration of his good impulses with no hope? This question assumes that God is himself good and that his morality and justice will not be less moral than man's partial understanding of morality, but indeed his morality will be even greater. It also assumes that God had a good purpose in mind when creating man, hence man has some good impulses. Progress in the moral realm is development of right relations with the universe and with God.

*Automatic Progress.* Many have mistaken the concept of "progress" and "progress in history" for "automatic progress." None of the great leaders in the Social Gospel movement assumed that progress was automatic, but rather it was something that God and man together, or else God through man, could achieve. It is true, however, that they had varying understandings as to the ease and extent of possible progress. It is also true that there were lesser prophets who related themselves to the greater, and did proclaim an automatic progressive social evolution which has been regarded as a theistic counterpart to the Marxian dialectical materialism and a social counterpart to Darwinism.

Mr. Dickinson has demonstrated that two of the outstanding leaders in the field of social ethics are agreed that God is at work in history among men and society, and that justice tempered by love is attainable, although limited by sin. And sin is always both individual and social. But, says Rauschenbusch in effect, the Kingdom of God, which is both present and future, which is the purpose of the Christian religion, and which will be in conflict with evil as long as there is evil, is divine in origin, progress, and

consummation! <sup>7</sup> Reinhold Niebuhr, while agreeing with Rauschenbusch that God is at work in history, has given us in his more recent writings a chastened concept of progress.

Much orthodox Protestantism stresses the inherent sinfulness of man to the neglect of his worth. From another approach it may be said, "Yes, Christ died for our sins. Man must have been worth dying for, worth redeeming." Then God must have created man with a moral capacity which gives him dignity among the creations of God and a purpose for living. It follows then that he has a capacity for justice, and that government is at least a partial expression of the desire of a community for justice and order.

Should we overemphasize the sinful nature of man, then there is no "good news" in the gospel other than the news that "This too shall pass away" and a stressing of justice beyond history. Such overemphasis cuts the nerve-root of any sense of responsibility or responsible participation in society.

*Summary.* Social ethics, then, has the problem of deriving a clear view of the realities with which we must deal in our common social life, of both the optimistic and the pessimistic aspects, and encouraging a sense of responsibility for achieving the highest possible measure of justice tempered by love, and freedom tempered by order. It includes the recognition that man is created for good though the possibility for evil is tremendous. Opportunities should be given for self-realization, but other social action may be necessary to prevent him from realizing his evil self. Concerning history: God is at work for good and it is possible to realize good, though terrible evils may take place. Responsible citizens and Christians are charged to use what instruments, position, or status they may have to further the good and check the evil. To do this they must recognize that whatever is not in the service of man is already in the service of that which oppresses him. Care and constant re-evaluation must be employed in the use of power lest the means used defeat the possibility of achieving the ends sought. It is also necessary to seek continually to discover the inner complexities of our own motivations and ideals, so that pride and selfish bias be reduced as much as possible.

### III. SOCIAL ACTION

Effective social action seeks the best possible solution to social evil or social problems. It will be concerned with individuals and at the same time

<sup>7</sup> Rauschenbusch, W., *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, The Macmillan Company, 1917, pp. 137-145.

recognize that persons do not exist apart from their social or cultural situation and heritage. Hence in seeking the salvation of individuals it will be necessary to do so in the context of their culture. The transformation of the individual cannot be separated from the transformation of culture, for they are mutually intertwined and respond to each other. All types of education, group work methods, action research, pronouncement, legislation, and personal commitment will be among the tools used.

Much attempted social action has been naïve and ineffective, while other action has been effective. Perhaps the most futile form is that of the ecclesiastical pronouncement which "deplores" some evil or social problem. There is a value to a pronouncement that is positively stated. The debate which may have preceded its adoption may have some educational value. There is also a value in having a statement to which reference may be made. However, if the pronouncement gets no further than publication in small type in the journal of some conference or synod, it is largely futile.

Under the influence of the many prophets of doom (of which every generation has a generous share) and noting the ineffectiveness of some social action and discouraged by the prevalence of sin, someone may well ask: "What good is it anyway? Can social problems be solved? Can the church do anything about their solution?"

Although there is little reason to believe that there will ever be a time in history when all problems are solved, there is reason to believe that individual problems will be solved though others will arise. The problem of racism is not solved by the integration of the school systems, but the problem of segregation and discrimination in education will be immensely improved in many communities, and on the university level it is fast approaching solution. Racism, as we know it, is a comparatively modern problem, and new aspects of it are bound to arise. Nevertheless race relations are being improved through solution of certain problems. Gunnar Myrdal in his monumental study, *An American Dilemma*, gives us reason to believe that racism may be eliminated in time, though not in foreseeable time. However, this does not mean that other problems of in-group and out-group discrimination will not occur.

Looking now to another problem. It has been said that there will always be war. The study of war by Sorokin<sup>8</sup> indicates that although a new war starts on an average of every two years in recorded history, there have been two periods in Western history when a high degree of peace was estab-

<sup>8</sup> Sorokin, P. A., *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, Vol. III, New York: American Book Co., 1937-1941. (A revised one-volume abridgement of this work was published by Porter Sargent, Boston, 1957.)

lished. One was the time of the *Pax Romana*, an enforced peace lasting until Rome began to decay morally, and the other was from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries when Western civilization was caught up in the Roman Catholic church-state ideology.

Gardner Murphy, a social psychologist, suggests in his *Human Nature and Enduring Peace*<sup>9</sup> not only that human nature can be changed, but that it has been changed. It is not possible to summarize his reasoning or conclusions here, but the illustration of the Swedish people can be alluded to. Once a people with a warlike culture, they now are among the most persistent lovers of, and workers for, peace. Anthropological findings of Franz Boas, Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, and others indicate that there are primitive societies in existence today that have not known the kind of violence that we call war. This further supports Murphy's thesis that war is not innate, universal, and inevitable.

As with Swedish people, so with the Dutch. Once very warlike, in recent centuries they have been rather peaceful. This particular form of violence in human affairs has been lessened in the cultures of the two nations. At length it may be reduced elsewhere, and eventually war in its present form may disappear.

Even if we should despair of human nature and man because he is a sinner, this does not mean that social problems cannot be solved. There is no reason to give up with a shrug of the shoulders or a sigh of disillusionment. A sinful act becomes a social problem only when it emerges as social behavior and takes a place in the social structure. These problems are relative and cultural and can often be resolved. This is true regardless of one's concept of human nature and sin.

Can the church do anything toward social action and the solution of social problems? With a Christian social ethic as a standard it can seek to measure all social phenomena, holding up the plumb line of justice tempered by love, freedom tempered by order, recognizing that whatever is not in the service of men is already in the service of that which oppresses them.

<sup>9</sup> Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1945.



# The Prophetic Voice of the Church

ROY PEARSON

THE LATE WILLIAM TEMPLE once remarked that if a man ever caught himself saying about the church, "I got no good from it, so I gave up going," he only proved that he had been going to the church for the wrong reasons.<sup>1</sup> At one time or another, all of us turn to the church for purposes of acquisition. We go to get, and often rightly so; for the desire for insight, steadiness, fellowship, and forgiveness is no cause for shame when these constitute the ends for which we seek the church's help. But Dr. Temple's words still sound the more important note. The primary function of the church is not self-ministry. The church is less a hospital than an army. If it sometimes turns inward and looks at its own needs, it is only that it may then turn outward and look at the needs of the world beyond its own frontiers; and if it sometimes licks its own wounds, it is only that it may then move out with greater strength to tend the wounds of other men.

In other words, the church is not a place of refuge but a host prepared for battle, and in that battle its prophetic voice will always play a major part. By the *prophetic voice* of the church I mean the church in its capacity as an agent charged with "speaking for" God. This is the church telling the world

What God thinks  
What God wants  
How God feels  
What God hates  
What God opposes  
What God supports, and therefore,  
How God is related to the specific issues  
of our own particular day.

And by the *church* I mean all the groups and all the institutions which claim to be Christian churches. For my present purpose, the church is the people who have identified themselves as members of its visible and organized

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<sup>1</sup> Temple, W., *Christian Faith and Life*, S. C. M. Press, 1931, p. 130.

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forms. It is the universal church but also the local church; Baptists but also Methodists, Lutherans, and Episcopalians; ministers but also laymen; the Christlike but also the Satanic.

What, then, are some of the characteristics of the prophetic voice of the church? How does it manifest itself today? And in what sense are members of the church a part of it?

# I

Think first about the world to which the voice must speak—the environment of the institution, the context of the gospel, the problem of relevant discipleship, the heartache of God. That world is frequently an ugly world, but in a day when so much of the church in this country occupies a wholly different sphere of thought and life, the understanding of the task is an inescapable prelude to the undertaking of it.

*First item. Time*, March 25, 1957. Subject: Romance Magazines.

"I SNEAKED OUT AT NIGHT FOR THRILLS!" trumpets the April cover of Dell's *Modern Romances*. Wails quarterly *Secret Confessions'* current cover line: "I COMMITTED ADULTERY!" Inside the slick color covers, the so-called "confession" or "romance" magazines come through with sagas of sex and suffering that make the most lurid tabloid story read like *Mother Goose*. In the current issue of Standard Magazines' *True Life Stories*, a teen-ager in 7,000 action-packed words recounts her father's suicide, her poverty-ridden childhood with a lunatic grandmother, rape by a giggling maniac, seduction by her boss's stepson, addiction to "sex-pills," confinement in a home for delinquent girls. Of eleven stories in the April issue of Macfadden Publications' *True Story*, three involve unwed mothers, two feature divorce, another relates the plight of a girl who is forced by scandalmongers into an unwanted marriage.

And *Time* reports the circulation of these magazines at a steady 10,000,000 copies per issue.

*Second item. The Christian Century*, April 3, 1957. Subject: Aid to Education.

Our children now appear likely to be the principal victims of the drive to cut the federal budget. No federal assistance for building needed classrooms will be forthcoming unless those whose care for children is not measured by dollars exert pressure on Congress. As usual, the United States Chamber of Commerce is leading the cry against federal assistance. Its education committee recently charged that no classroom shortage exists . . . Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Marion B. Folsom declares this statement is untrue. . . . He says: "For three years in a row, the figure has been the same—2,250,000 children above capacity."

*Third item. The Boston Herald*, September 4, 1956. Subject: Suicide Pills.

A civilian scientific consultant to the Army today recommended furnishing suicidal "cyanide pills" to armed forces members entrusted with really top-secret information—for use when in danger of being "brainwashed."

Dr. James G. Miller, University of Michigan psychiatrist and director of a program for selecting American secret agents at the close of World War II, said he felt such a move is necessary because of the "potentialities" that brainwashing techniques may eventually become much more rigorous than now, perhaps involving powerful drugs, electrical stimulation of the brain and other techniques.

Miller, speaking at a special symposium on "brainwashing" at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, declared: "The primary secrets should be known only to a few, and, like Goering (the wartime Nazi air chief), they should be provided with a cyanide pill or other means of suicide. Then they should be ordered to make use of it just before their captors have removed from them the ability to make decisions and carry them out."

*Fourth item. The Boston Herald*, February 12, 1957. Subject: Training Marines at Parris Island.

Some of the things uncovered here were practices of standing recruits at attention to slug them and the holding of a naked bayonet, point upward, under the stomach of a man poised on elbows and toes. The old philosophy of how to make a Marine at Parris Island wasn't unlike that of brainwashing—a term, but not an idea, born in Korea. It was to tear apart the youth that came in here, destroying every shred of his personality and individuality, and then to rebuild him back up again into a stereotyped, emotionless, disciplined fighting machine. Col. R. M. Hinzenga, the base training officer, says the theory here is still the same—"but we don't tear them down so far."

*Fifth Item. Time*, January 16, 1956. Subject: Narcotics.

The U.S. now has more drug addicts (60,000) than all other Western nations combined. In the past three years the Federal Bureau of Narcotics has compiled a list of names and addresses of 30,000 known addicts, and the list is growing at the rate of 1,000 a month.

Illegal dope traffic has trebled since World War II. At the end of the war, there was one addict to every 10,000 persons in the U.S.; in 1955 there was one to every 3,000. Thirteen per cent of all addicts in the country are under 21.

Approximately 50% of all crime in U.S. cities, and 25% of all crime in the nation, is attributable to drug addiction.

*Sixth item. Christopher News Notes*, April, 1955. Subject: Grim Record.

We can rightly boast of our material advances in this 20th century. But we should not blink at the fact that it has been likewise the bloodiest period in human history, and that modern ingenuity has now made possible universal death and destruction through the atom and hydrogen bombs.

During the past 40 years, 63 million human beings were killed in two World Wars. Countless millions of others were maimed and crippled. The cost in money alone was more than a thousand billion dollars.

Within the past few years, 33 thousand Americans were killed and more than

103 thousand wounded in the Korean conflict that cost the American taxpayers another hundred billion dollars.

*Seventh item. Hungry Men*, by Leonard Hurst. Subject: Agony.

The population of the world is roughly 2,500 million people. Two-thirds of this vast number are living in conditions of acute hunger, squalor and misery.

*Eighth item. The Boston Sunday Herald*, March 10, 1957. Subject: Miami.

But the Miami tone is set by the big chiefs uptown. Hotels? Fabulous. Fabulous. Look at all that glass, at the gold telephones in your room at your private terrace with a view of the Atlantic . . . Architecture—what do you like? A little of Louis XIV with a dash of Frank Lloyd Wright and a soupçon of Las Vegas perhaps? We got 'em all in one . . . Lobbies? You could play football in one, if it weren't for the Greek statues or the gold-tiled columns . . . Swimming pools? Every one is "Olympic-size" regardless of dimension or shape . . . Expensive? Listen, you can pay \$100 a day for a room. Where else could you pay more? Sure that's without food. You think they can give it away? Some of this ocean front land cost \$6,000 a front foot . . . In the women's shop of the Americana, "this year's hotel," the owner reported: "Well, we've sold dresses for \$1,000 each and chinchilla pieces for \$5,000. But don't get the wrong idea. The average woman coming in here will spend only between \$1,500 and \$2,000 for a stole. They'll buy the kind of thing they can pay for easily without having to consult their husbands."

*Ninth item. Time*, April 1, 1957. Subject: Captain René Moureau.

Lean, blue-eyed Captain Moureau, 37, was district government officer in Tarjicht, Morocco, a district the size of Massachusetts but with a meager population of tribesmen, camels and sheep. He ruled his desert strip so successfully and was liked by its people so well that he stayed on after the French withdrew from Morocco. Then the Moroccan "Army of Liberation" came to pillage Tarjicht and nine months ago Captain Moureau disappeared. But the desert has its verbal grapevine, and over this came, piece by piece, news of Captain Moureau's fate: emasculated, both arms broken, he was, when last seen alive, on exhibition in an animal's cage, chained hand and foot, dressed in the travesty of a French uniform, with an obscene inscription pinned to his back.

*And finally, four brief miscellaneous items.*

An Indian ambassador and his secretary barred from the public restaurant at the Houston Airport because they were mistaken for Negroes.<sup>2</sup>

Mendés-France made an object of amazement and even ridicule because he preferred to drink milk and stay sober, rather than to drink alcoholic beverages and be drunk.<sup>3</sup>

A California lawyer writing to a prominent church official that there was good reason to suspect the phrase "the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man"

<sup>2</sup> *The Christian Century*, February 9, 1955.

<sup>3</sup> *Time*, December 6, 1954.

because it has "become identified with the extreme left wing of the Democratic Party."<sup>4</sup>

A little boy being interviewed on the radio by a master of ceremonies who had just asked him what his father did for a living. "Well," said the boy, "my first father is a printer." "And what about your second father?" the announcer asked, obviously trying not to embarrass the boy by showing surprise or regret that his parents had been divorced. "My second father is a salesman," the boy replied, and before the master of ceremonies could say anything else, the boy added, "And my third father is a carpenter."<sup>5</sup>

It is immediately obvious that these items do not represent the world's totality today, but is it not equally clear that they do constitute an essential part of the world? In fact, they probably call to mind the most important part of the world with which the prophetic voice of the church must deal. They are the environment of the institution, the context of the gospel, the problem of relevant discipleship, the heartache of God. And it is against this background that I speak of the church in its role as God's prophet.

So let my first word be the recollection that the world outside the church's borders is a world of widespread chaos and confusion, a frightened and tortured world where sin and ignorance do battle for the souls of men.

## II

My second purpose is to put on record a statement which ought to need little defense: in this world of chaos and confusion the church is inescapably involved.

To be sure, the responsibility of the church in this area is not yet universally accepted. One day in New York, for example, the pastor of a City Mission Society church suddenly realized that the problems of his blighted community had come up to the very doors of his church.

Right next door marijuana was being distributed. Down the street a house of prostitution was doing a flourishing business. In a grocery store opposite policy-ticket gambling was rife. One of the neighborhood's most dangerous gangs had taken up headquarters in the corner poolroom. In the course of his campaign to clean up, the pastor tried to enlist the aid of the local police captain. After studying the situation this proponent of law and order turned to the pastor with the query: "Reverend, why don't you get off this block? This is no place for a church."<sup>6</sup>

This attitude about the church's implication in the world is still far from unique, but there is an even greater host which probes a little deeper. Witness Alexander Miller in *The Christian Significance of Karl Marx*:

<sup>4</sup> Personal letter to a friend of the author.

<sup>5</sup> Radio program heard by the author.

<sup>6</sup> *The Christian Century*, August 3, 1955, p. 899.

Christians . . . are inextricably involved in all the material and social concerns that affect the lives of normal men. . . . In this area of life inaction is a kind of action. To be indifferent to the way in which social life is ordered is . . . to take sides with corruption and tyranny, graft and reaction, since these social evils feed on the indifference and inactivity of ordinary folk, and count on it for their continuing existence.<sup>7</sup>

Or witness Harry Emerson Fosdick in *The Living of These Days*:

As a preacher I found myself constantly on a two-way street. If I started with the social gospel, I ran into the need of better individual men and women who alone could create and sustain a better social order, and so found myself facing the personal gospel; and if I started with the personal gospel, I ran straight into the evils of society that ruin personality, and so found myself facing the social gospel.<sup>8</sup>

Sooner or later, the church must fully face the facts. The creatures enmeshed in this world of chaos and confusion are human beings. They are people, and can anyone say that the church is not interested in people? Much of the suffering is not individually caused. It is public, corporate, organized evil, and who will claim that public wrong is past the sphere of God's concern? As James A. Pike has put it, the church "can be interested in no less than God is interested in"; and as Joshua Liebman suggested, society creates the mind as surely as the mind creates society.

The real progress in the world is not "the self-creating society" but rather "the society creating the self." Thinkers like John Dewey and George Herbert Mead have exploded the eighteenth-century idea that the individual is endowed at birth with a "mind" by means of which he enters into social relations. These philosophers maintain that the individual *achieves* a mind through the social influence of language and the group impact on the plastic growing substance of our personality.<sup>9</sup>

If our world of chaos and confusion is playing any major part in creating the minds of men today, it is scarcely an impregnable thesis that the church has no concern with that society. Call it social action. Call it the social gospel. Call it meddling in politics and economics. Call it what you will. The church is unavoidably implicated. The church has no honorable choice but to be involved.

### III

In the third place, it needs to be recalled that in undertaking to discharge its responsibility in this area the church is not unarmed. It has something to say.

Speaking in the most general terms, we can certainly point out that the church has the gospel of Jesus Christ. "Christians who claim that they

<sup>7</sup> The Macmillan Company, 1947, pp. 94 ff.

<sup>8</sup> Harper & Brothers, 1957, pp. 279 ff.

<sup>9</sup> Liebman, J. L., *Peace of Mind*, Simon and Schuster, 1946, p. 61.

lack an ideology to oppose Communism overlook Christianity." And if no attempt is made to be specific, the content of the prophetic voice of the church is obvious: it is the whole Christian gospel.

But even in the category of specific relevance the church has no other reasons for silence than ignorance or cowardice. Go back again to that world of chaos and confusion. Is there nothing in the Christian gospel which gives the church the means for saying that men made in God's image have something better to do with their minds than read true-story magazines and that public schools have rootage in religious faith? Does the church have any reason for hesitance in declaring that a so-called Christian nation must be losing some measure of its moral leadership when it lets its enemies so set its own standards that it follows its foes into suicide pills and brain-washing? Is there nothing obviously anti-Christian in narcotics, and can sixty-three million human beings be killed in two World Wars without the church feeling the pain? When two thirds of the world's population is living "in conditions of acute hunger, squalor and misery," is the church to find nothing but amusement in the Miami hotels where a woman can pay \$2,000 for a stole without even consulting her husband? Surely the church need not be dumb when human beings are caged like animals, when the world has no better standard of a man's worth than the color of his skin, when sobriety becomes a cause for laughter, when men are held suspect because they believe in "the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man," or when a little child is made the victim of his parents' "serial polygamy."

And when the community seeks its own answers to the illnesses which wrack its body, does not the church have full warrant for the warning that the community must not sell itself short? Outside a gasoline station on the Worcester Turnpike there was for several weeks a huge sign reading "LIMP IN—LEAP OUT." I am not quite sure about automobiles: perhaps Sunoco Gasoline can keep the promise which that sign extended. But I am wholly confident about human beings: there is no solution that simple for them, and the church has enough information to be able to say to the world that its healing is not a task for aspirin tablets. Surgery is indicated—repentance, righteousness, redemption.

#### IV

And then, fourth, it is worth remembering that the church's responsibility for a prophetic voice is not a recent acquisition. Indeed, the warrant for that voice is older than the church itself, and long before the church



was born, there were men who built the precedents on which the church would one day take its stand. Let there be injustice or pain, and always God was there; and always, too, there was a call that pierced the tortured hours and pricked the hearts of some man or woman, some group or institution. "Come! Be my prophet," God was saying, "Speak for me, and help to heal the hurts of men."

There has never been a day when God has not needed a prophet, but let our present probing backward go no farther than the biblical tradition. What was the rebellion of the Israelites in Egypt but a great strike in the building trades along the Nile, and who was its leader but Moses? Is there nothing authentically prophetic about the words of Amos when he said:

Hear this, you who trample upon the needy,  
and bring the poor of the land to an end,  
saying, "When will the new moon be over,  
that we may sell grain?  
And the sabbath,  
that we may offer wheat for sale,  
that we may make the ephah small and the shekel great,  
and deal deceitfully with false balances . . .  
and sell the refuse of the wheat?"

The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob:  
"Surely I will never forget any of their deeds." <sup>10</sup>

Hear the words of Jesus denouncing the scribes and the Pharisees: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law, justice and mercy and faith. . . ." <sup>11</sup> Or hear him cleaning out the temple: "He said to them, 'It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer; but you make it a den of robbers.' " <sup>12</sup> Or hear him gather into his own person all the hungry and thirsty people of the world—all the refugees and wanderers, all the naked and sick and imprisoned: "Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me." <sup>13</sup> Or think of the words of James: "If a brother or sister is ill-clad and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead." <sup>14</sup>

The prophetic voice in social crisis or personal anguish is not an

<sup>10</sup> Amos 8:4-7. This and subsequent biblical quotations are from the Revised Standard Version.

<sup>11</sup> Matt. 23:23.

<sup>12</sup> Matt. 21:13.

<sup>13</sup> Matt. 25:45.

<sup>14</sup> James 2:15-17.

innovation. It is not a need dreamed up by modern young ministers. It is as old as man himself.<sup>15</sup> It is an inseparable part of the distinctively biblical tradition, and it has been a necessary aspect of the church's life all the way from Peter and the apostles proclaiming, "We must obey God rather than men,"<sup>16</sup> to Ambrose publicly barring the Emperor Theodosius from his cathedral in Milan because he had condemned people without a hearing, to the Christian abolitionists of the nineteenth century, to the conscientious objectors of the contemporary fellowship in Christ. The prophetic voice of the church is not an illegitimate child: it has a pedigree. Its rights in the family are not by adoption: its descent is by blood.

## V

My fifth consideration is to say that the prophetic voice belongs to the church's professional ministry. If upon no one else in all the world, then certainly upon the church's ministers is laid the need to speak for God and be his prophet. Beyond all other men, the pastor of a church is charged with proclaiming

What God thinks  
What God wants  
What God feels  
What God hates  
What God opposes  
What God supports, and therefore,  
How God is related to the specific issues  
of our own particular day.

When the minister stands in his pulpit or when he stands in any other place to separate the strands of right and wrong, he is to be seen as a prophet. He does not speak for himself. He speaks for God. His authority is derivative. His function is representative. He has a cosmic warrant for his words, and on the lips of mortal man the voiceless God finds a voice.

This is not to say that no ministers have been false prophets or that none have needed correction by the lay members of their parishes. Nor is this a claim that ministers have never been utterly mistaken about God's will, preached the part as if it were the whole, or posed as experts when they were not even amateurs. The church's worst enemies have been the people of its own household, and there is a sense in which the church has prospered less because of its leaders than in spite of them.

<sup>15</sup> See, e.g., Bennett, John C., "Enduring Bases of Christian Action," in *Social Action*, June 15, 1943.

<sup>16</sup> Acts 5:29.

But if God can make even the wrath of men to praise him, he is not dismayed by the folly; and if the false prophet serves no other worthy purpose, at least he bears unwitting witness to the need of the true. A minister is properly an instrument of God's articulation, and the Lord has a controversy with his people. One of the best reasons for a minister's dismissal is that he never makes his people want to dismiss him, and one of the surest justifications for retaining him at any cost is that the loss of him would make church membership more pleasant. To uncover evil, to attack complacency, to prod consciences, to fight for justice, to urge specific action—these undertakings are, in part, the prophetic voice of the church; and if the voice belongs to the church's professional ministry, so do the undertakings. Called to be a minister, a man is charged with being a pastor and a teacher; but he is also charged with being a prophet. He is charged with being a priest and an administrator, but he is also charged with being a prophet. And when a church condemns a man's prophetic voice, it rebukes him for being what it asked him to be.

## VI

In the sixth place, however, it must not be forgotten that the prophetic voice of the church also belongs to the laity. Admission to the church's membership is in itself a kind of ordination. It represents the acceptance of the individual for the church's ministry, and every member of the church is properly a pastor, a preacher, a priest, an administrator, and a prophet. Professional clergymen are called to do with all of their time what every church member is called to be doing with part of his time. For reasons of continuity and order, the full-time minister will usually be responsible for the church's public worship, and certain treasures of the church like the sacraments will commonly be reserved for his administration. But there is no essential difference of quality between his ministry and that of any other member of the church. The professional minister is the minister of a ministering community. He is a preacher to other preachers, a pastor to other pastors, a priest to other priests, an administrator of other administrators, and a prophet to other prophets.

If there is a priesthood of all believers, so is there a prophethood of all believers, and the prophetic voice of the laity has innumerable avenues of effective expression. It speaks within the church through public preaching and teaching, but it also speaks in church meetings and committee discussions. It may manifest itself in the community at large when a man takes the floor of the town meeting, and speaks about bad housing conditions. In

a large business office it may be the lay prophetic voice which calls into question the prevailing practices for engaging and dismissing personnel, and the voice belongs no less to the church when a sixteen-year-old girl who is a member objects to slander of a minority group at the family dinner table.

Moreover, it is strangely true that the lay prophetic voice is often more persuasive than the clerical, and for this fact there are several readily comprehensible reasons. For one thing, there are more laymen than ministers, and the voice that swells from many throats is stronger than the voice which emanates from only few. Furthermore, the religious testimony of laymen is not subject to the automatic discount usually applied to that of ministers. When the man who praises the Chevrolet automobile is a paid salesman in the Chevrolet salesroom, the buyer keeps his fingers crossed at what he hears; and when the man who sings God's praises seems to buy his bread with what he sings, the world would like to have his word confirmed by someone having less to gain or lose by his singing. And still further, the layman has an insurmountable advantage in the place in which he does his daily work. As soon as he sits down at his desk, as soon as he gets to his store or takes up his tools or opens his case of samples, he is already "on location." The essential issues are no farther from him than his fingertips. When he speaks in a whisper, he can be heard more clearly than the minister who speaks in a shout, and what he says requires no translation. He can be immediately pertinent and obviously relevant. He knows his way around. He is familiar with the language.

So the prophetic voice of the church does not belong only to the professional ministry. It also belongs to the laity. It belongs to the carpenters and the truck drivers, to the housewives and the secretaries, to the teachers and the politicians who, being members of the church, are the present stewards of that apostolic succession whose origin was not in a professional priesthood nor even in Peter but in a corporate community of twelve lowly men who fished and farmed and gathered taxes.

## VII

Next and seventh, the prophetic voice of the church must not be limited to the obvious and acknowledged evils. In other words, there is no point in saying what has already been said effectively. The Bird Watchers Society, for example, will scarcely need assurance that birds are fascinating creatures. The Woman's Christian Temperance Union can usually be assumed to disapprove of alcohol. Plural marriage, woman's suffrage, child labor—in most parts of this country the battles in these areas have already been won,

and a soldier only wastes his bullets when he fires at the shadows on the empty battlefield.

At this particular time and in this specific land, the prophetic voice is always suspect when it limits itself to the cruder expressions of sin. Murder is wrong. Rape and adultery are wrong. Gambling, drinking, and narcotic addiction—in greater or lesser degree, all of them are wrong in many of their prevalent manifestations. The world of chaos and confusion has often been as much the origin of the evil as the victim, and wherever the pathological behavior is not recognized as such, or wherever it threatens to become a fire out of control, the prophetic voice of the church is made unquestionably relevant. But when the evil is already clearly discerned and effectively opposed, the steady condemnation of it is usually nothing but irritating and even cowardly repetition. It is like insisting that two plus two equals four when everyone has known that fact for many years; and one sometimes suspects that the church's preoccupation with the crass sins of its enemies is partially caused by its dread of being forced to handle the more refined sins of its friends.

But at this particular time and in this specific land, the real relevance of the church's prophetic voice is often to be found only in the more polite and cultured sins which do not look like sins at all. Sins which have washed their faces and changed their clothes and gone to live in the big white houses on the better side of the railroad tracks. Acts which are sins but not crimes. Deeds of conscious omission or intentional cowardice or calmly deliberate malice. Attitudes which the best people hold. Wrongs which the finest people do. Racial discrimination, for example, can be entrenched either by the uncouth rantings of a longshoreman or by the impeccable phrases of a banker; and although it is important that the church deal with the longshoreman, it is perhaps even more important that it deal with the banker. Theft can be committed by a robber with a gun or by a lawyer with his law books; and although the church must condemn the act of the robber, it is probably even more essential that it condemn that of the lawyer.

In 1954 a new California statute had required representatives of churches desiring exemption from taxation to sign a loyalty oath, and the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd at San Jose opposed the requirement. Pointing out that the church condemns totalitarianism and the use of force or violence to carry out any purpose, the statement continued:

We protest the loyalty oath because (1) it is a part of the current hysteria in which some citizens consider it an act of patriotism to be suspicious of the patriotism of others; (2) it seems to rest on an assumption that is foreign to the American tradi-

tion, namely, that a person or organization is guilty of an infraction unless he or it specifically declares otherwise, and (3) it is a type of required conformity that, if further extended, would prohibit the church from exercising a role in society which it feels obligated before Almighty God to carry out—that of defending what is right and Christian, wherever this may be found and by whomever practiced, and opposing what is unchristian regardless of where it is found or by whom practiced.<sup>17</sup>

The specific subject matter of this particular statement is not consequential for my present purpose, but unless the church sometimes finds itself thus rowing against a popular tide, it has good reason to question the integrity of its prophetic role. The church is meant to be the leaven, not the lump, and it never stands in greater danger than when everyone speaks well of it.

### VIII

And now the eighth step forward: at its best, the prophetic voice speaks to local conditions. Many of the church's prophetic utterances remind me of the evening when we discovered that something strange had happened to the telephone in our home. All we could get was long distance. Whenever we lifted the receiver from its cradle, the operator stood ready to connect us with New York or Los Angeles, with London or Berlin, with Tokyo or Calcutta. But we could not get the house next door. We could not get the drugstore downtown, or the friend in Boston, or the office on top of the hill. The telephone had no local connections.

It is always relatively easy to be prophetic about the distant. The issues seem much clearer when we stand apart from them—and also much safer. It is not hard for us to be prophetic about international affairs. We know what the Russians ought to do, what the Chinese and Egyptians and British ought to do; and we can be incredibly heroic in our prescriptions of their proper conduct. It is not even difficult for us to be prophetic about the corporate life of our own nation. We know what policies the President should follow, what kind of life a Senator in Washington should live; and we take abundant pride in the forthrightness with which we condemn their vacillations or immorality. Being prophetic about the distant is both simple and pleasant. We do not have to stand cross-examination. We do not have to answer questions about our own conduct. We do not even have to practice what we preach. And we still can have the satisfaction of believing that we have been brave and uncompromising, that we have blown the trumpets of truth and held aloft the bright banners of righteousness.

But when we hold before us the mirror of words like those of John C. Bennett, the suit which we have donned does not appear to fit so well:

<sup>17</sup> *The Christian Century*, April 7, 1954, p. 419.



There is a danger that we may put too much emphasis on world-shaking problems, and not enough on the development of community life in a village or in a parish. The Christian as citizen must begin with the most immediate local responsibilities. His opinions and his votes concerning large-scale political issues are important; but frequently, while he may be able to do very little about these issues, he can do a great deal about the local school, or the extension of health services, or the improvement of farming methods, or about the spirit of the community in his immediate neighborhood. Often what he does in his own parish can have surprising indirect effects upon the life of the community.<sup>18</sup>

Or think about a single, specific instance. Several years ago in one of the large cities in western Massachusetts a small church had rented its auditorium to a speaker representing a cause offensive to a church many times larger than itself. The deacons of the smaller church were prominent businessmen in the city, and when the members of the larger church became aware of the coming event, they employed a simple and effective strategy. They made a few quiet calls on the deacons. "Cancel the arrangements," they said, "or we boycott your businesses." And the arrangements were canceled. Prophecy was all right if you could keep it at arm's length, but it became intolerable when it was as local as your pocketbook.

Substandard housing among the community's poorer people, labor conditions in the town's factories and mills, discrimination against Negroes or Jews in the local barber shop, overcrowding in the public schools, inefficiency in the city's police, corruption in the church itself—admittedly these problems are delicate and troublesome, but if the church is not in trouble, it is a displaced institution. Admittedly also these problems are embarrassingly local, but if the church is not local even to the point of embarrassment both to itself and to its immediate environment, it is uprooted from its proper soil, and sooner or later it will die a death which may be mourned by men but not by God.

## IX

Finally, the proper use of the church's prophetic voice requires a rare blend of righteous indignation, holy courage, steady persistence, personal graciousness, and Christlike humility.

First, *righteous indignation*. In the comic strip *Pogo*, for example, there was a time when his comrades in the swamp were badgering Pogo to run for the Presidency. At last his patience was exhausted, and he rose up in angry rebellion: "I ain't said much, but I is been pushed around EE-nuf! I is gone stand up for my rights, and I is got rights I isn't hardly used

<sup>18</sup> Bennett, J. C., *The Christian as Citizen*, Association Press, 1955, p. 77.

yet! Everybody talkin' 'bout CIVIL LIBERTIES! Well, I is A-GIN critturs what takes UN-CIVIL liberties with my personal self."<sup>19</sup>

Second, *holy courage*. "Don't let them scare you," writes Elmer Davis.

The first and great commandment is, Don't let them scare you. For the men who are trying to do this to us are scared themselves. . . . This nation was conceived in liberty and dedicated to the principle—among others—that honest men may honestly disagree . . . I believe it will endure, but only if we stand up for it . . . this will remain the land of the free only so long as it is the home of the brave.<sup>20</sup>

Third, *steady persistence*. L. A. G. Strong gives good expression to that achievement of the will in the little poem entitled "Old Dan'l" which David McCord includes in *The Pocket Book of Humorous Verse*:

Out of his cottage to the sun  
Bent double comes old Dan'l,  
His chest all over cotton wool,  
His back all over flannel.

"Winter will finish him," they've said  
Each winter now for ten:  
But come the first warm day of spring  
Old Dan'l's out again.<sup>21</sup>

Fourth, *personal graciousness*. In the seventeenth century there lived a man named John Lilburne, of whom one of his contemporaries remarked that if the world were emptied of all but John Lilburne, Lilburne would quarrel with John and John with Lilburne. And if the earth would find it hard to live *without* the prophets, it often finds it hard to live *with* them. Not always because they speak an undesired truth. Sometimes because they have allowed themselves to be undesirable people.

And fifth, *Christlike humility*. Many years ago I read a few words by Oliver Cromwell which have often risen up to haunt my pulpit ministry: "My brethren, by the bowels of Christ I beseech you, bethink you that you may be mistaken." And even in the white heat of his climactic utterance, the prophet must ask himself some questions: "Do I speak for God or for myself? Am I absolutely sure? Could it be that I am wrong?"

Not long ago, one of our former students at Andover Newton came back to pay us a visit, and he told us how well things were going in his church—good attendance at morning worship, enthusiasm on the part of his people for all of the church's program, a new building going up and renovations being made on the old building. There was only one problem.

<sup>19</sup> Kelly, Walt, *The Pogo Papers*, p. 28.

<sup>20</sup> Davis, E., *But We Were Born Free*, The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1954, pp. 113-115 *passim*.

<sup>21</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 7.

They wanted to excavate beneath the church to put in a better basement, but there was a city ordinance requiring that no church start its foundations more than six feet beneath the ground.

I do not know the reason for that city ordinance, and thinking of the church as a building, I should not object to the church's compliance. But when I think of the church as God's prophet, I know that it cannot permit such limitation of the depths it must plumb to find its foundations. The prophetic voice of the church must emerge from an institution founded on the truth. If it cannot be so founded, it wants to be silenced. If it is so founded, it cannot be silenced. And in either case, it has no need for arrogance. It is not the king but the king's ambassador. It does not speak for itself. It speaks for God.

### *Prayer for Ministers*

WALTER RAUSCHENBUSCH

O Jesus, we thy ministers bow before thee to confess the common sins of our calling. Thou knowest all things; thou knowest that we love thee and that our hearts' desire is to serve thee in faithfulness; and yet, like Peter, we have so often failed thee in the hour of thy need. If ever we have loved our own leadership and power when we sought to lead our people to thee, we pray thee to forgive. If we have been engrossed in narrow duties and little questions, when the vast needs of humanity called aloud for prophetic vision and apostolic sympathy, we pray thee to forgive. If in our loyalty to the church of the past we have distrusted thy living voice and have suffered thee to pass from our door unheard, we pray thee to forgive. If ever we have been more concerned for the strong and the rich than for the shepherdless throngs of the people for whom thy soul grieved, we pray thee to forgive.

O Master, amidst our failures we cast ourselves upon thee in humility and contrition. We need new light and a new message. We need the ancient spirit of prophecy and the leaping fire and joy of a new conviction, and thou alone canst give it. . . . Give us thine inflexible sternness against sin, and thine inexhaustible compassion for the frailty and tragedy of those who do the sin. Make us faithful shepherds of thy flock, true seers of God, and true followers of Jesus.

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From *A Rauschenbusch Reader*, ed. by B. Y. Landis, Harper & Brothers, 1957, pp. 154-55 (quoted from *Prayers of the Social Awakening*). Used by permission.

# Deterrence, Foreign Policy and Quakerism

ROBERT O. BYRD

FOR THREE HUNDRED YEARS Quakers have had much to say about foreign policies based on deterrence. A systematic analysis of what they have had to say, and why they have said it, would seem appropriate.

Quakerism has had no faith in the morality or the efficacy of policies which rely on deterrence. It is this to which George Fox, the seventeenth-century founder of Quakerism, was referring when he inveighed against "postures of war."<sup>1</sup> Yet Friends, as the Quakers are sometimes called,<sup>2</sup> have not been averse to the use of restraints under some circumstances. Even deterrence has had a legitimate and necessary role to play. Fox himself gave some sanction to the display of force. This would appear to be the meaning of the oft-quoted advice Fox gave to William Penn. Penn sought from Fox a statement on Friends' attitude toward the wearing of the sword which was then an accepted item of apparel for men of Penn's rank and position. Fox advised, "William, wear thy sword as long as thee canst."<sup>3</sup>

But there was a note of sadness in this advice, and there is for Friends generally, when men and nations are unable to put their trust and confidence in other policies and other powers than those of deterrence. Friends have been convinced that there is a better way. This way is related directly to their experience that "God is a Spirit and they that worship him must

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<sup>1</sup> *The Journal of George Fox*, ed. Ernest Rhys, rev. Norman Penney, London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1924, p. 187.

<sup>2</sup> The official name for the Quakers is "The Religious Society of Friends." The problem of determining what is and what is not to be considered characteristic of Quakerism is difficult, and cannot be discussed at length here. Suffice it to note that it arises because Friends are a decentralized and noncreedal society; there is within it a wide variety of beliefs and practices. For our purposes, Quakerism is defined as that body of beliefs and practices which has had persistence and staying power in the Society and the observance of which has led people into a closer identification with the Society rather than away from it. While not always easy to apply, these standards have provided a touchstone.

<sup>3</sup> Hull, William I., *William Penn: A Topical Biography*, Oxford University Press, 1937, p. 308.

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worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24), and that there is something of this God and spirit in man, in all men. Such a belief has profound consequences.

1. For Friends this belief results in an optimistic approach to life. Though Friends recognize the fact of Darkness in all men, as well as Light, they are convinced that all men have and can develop an increased awareness of and a capacity to respond to "the Light." The timing may be uncertain, but Friends have not doubted that the future belongs to the Light and not to Darkness. The Light is the creative element built into the very structure of the universe and it has the power and the inevitability of natural law.

2. The spirit within being the essence of all life, Friends' outlook on life is characterized by unity. Life is not divided into the sacred and the secular, the here and the hereafter, the physical and the spiritual. Essentially all are one and it is the object of existence to realize that unity in full.

3. This unity of life through the Light within all has important implications for the ends-means dilemma. The unity of life means, to Friends, that the nature of the means used is inextricably united to the ends which flow from that means. Means that are essentially destructive cannot well serve ends that are essentially constructive. Means that are essentially evil cannot well serve ends that are essentially good, and the criterion for determining good and evil is the degree to which particular means or ends foster or retard the fullest development of the spirit within both the subject and the object of action.

4. But more important than either ends or means is the motivation behind them both. Ends and means can be left largely to themselves if motivation is focused clearly on the desire to maximize the opportunity for an awareness of the Spirit within. It is at this motivational level that efforts to influence behavior should be directed, not at the superficial level of control of ends and means.

5. Friends' conception of the unity of life implies that mankind is irrevocably linked. Not only is it impossible for individuals or groups of individuals indefinitely to secure social, economic, and political advantages for themselves that are not accorded to all, there is a moral unity to life as well. As long as there is evil in the world, all men are joined to it. It is a mistake to place primary emphasis on ferreting out the individual agents of such evil to punish them, for all bear responsibility. Time and energy are better dedicated to the removal of the underlying social, economic, political, and spiritual conditions in which such evil thrives.



## WHEN "THAT OF GOD" BECOMES POLITICAL

This belief in the existence and the primacy of that "of God," a God of Spirit, in every individual has political consequences too.

1. The spirit that is of God is in individuals and not in organizations of individuals, including political organizations. Government becomes an association of individuals embarked on a co-operative venture, the purpose of which is to provide a framework within which individuals can more freely and completely seek, realize, and express "that of God" within. Governments are in no sense ends in themselves, possessed of virtues which take precedence over individual values. Governments have a claim to loyalty which is secondary to the claims of "that of God" within. The individual's primary responsibility is to pursue his own self-interest, interpreted in terms of the fullest possible realization of unity with the "spirit within," unity with that same spirit in all men, and unity with the source of that spirit.

2. Secondary though the claims of government may be, they are nevertheless important. Friends' belief in the unity of life, based on mankind's common possession of "that of God within," means that the individual cannot reach fullest development in isolation from his fellow man, nor at the expense of his fellow man. "That of God" can only be realized to the full in society, and it is the individual's responsibility to see to it that government organizes society for this purpose. There is a presumption in favor of the validity of laws and regulations duly promulgated by society.

3. However, there is a point beyond which the individual should not go in obedience to government. When society, through government, orders a person to do something clearly contrary to that person's understanding of the requirements of his own spiritual development, that person is both politically irresponsible and spiritually crippled if he obeys the governmental order. In refusing to obey, such an individual is exercising high patriotism and may, by his refusal, bring government to a clearer sense of its proper obligation and mission.

4. Yet, this opposition to society and government must be engaged in openly, freely, nonviolently, and with a willingness to suffer the consequences of the refusal to comply, which historically have included fines, imprisonment, and death.

5. Responding to the leadings of "the Light within" does not always result in opposition to governmental policies. Just as often a sensitive response to inward promptings should lead to the support of governmental policies in those areas where government is clearly performing its rightful



function, and particularly where such policies require special courage and are lacking in popular support. Individuals and private associations may also be called upon to undertake projects of their own, paralleling, supplementing, or suggesting alternatives to extant public policy.

6. Though deploring all policy based on a philosophy of deterrence or coercion, Friends have recognized a rightful place for the police function in government. But minimum force should always be used, and then only for restraining and retraining. Coercion should never be used vindictively and capital punishment is never justified.

7. The primacy given the individual results in Friends' belief that when society is to be improved, this improvement must begin in the lives of individuals, particularly in the lives of those individuals seeking society's improvement. The same is true of groups working toward this end. Neither groups nor individuals can bring about improvements in society which they have not previously brought about within their own lives.

8. The unity of life, as Friends understand it, means that the same purposes and principles apply when an individual acts in his private capacity and when he acts in a public capacity.

#### ALL THIS AND FOREIGN POLICY

As Friends' approach to politics is but a specific application of their general beliefs, so Friends' approach to foreign policy is but a specific expression of their beliefs concerning politics.

Foreign policies, thus, are to be undertaken for the sole purpose of creating the most favorable climate for the free development of the individuals who compose the nation concerned. To Friends, the development of the citizenry of one country could never take place as a result of sacrificing the interests of others, and the development sought is a function of the individual's increasing sense of oneness with God and with all men. Friends have thus supported or opposed foreign policies according to the degree to which Friends have felt such policies would foster or disrupt the unity of man and God and the world community among men.

As in the national community, Friends have deplored the use of deterrents in the international community. Under no circumstances have Friends felt war to be a necessary or desirable solution to international problems, as the final effect of war is seen to be divisive and not unifying, the taking of human life being the ultimate act of disunity and never to be condoned.

But Friends have not believed in a passive or impotent foreign policy. The power on which they would rely, however, is moral and spiritual, and

not the power of deterrence or coercion. This moral and spiritual power is based on the certainty that there is in all men a strain of goodness, the image of God, on which reliance can be placed and to which appeal can be made. There is something to which appeal can be made, even in the most hardened. This is no less true when men function in groups than it is when men function as individuals.

Power is generated when "that of God" in one person or the people of one nation meets and mingles with "that of God" in other people or the people of another nation. The power thus tapped is nothing less than the power inherent in the essential pattern of the universe. The study of power, to Friends, then consists in gaining an understanding of those conditions under which it is most likely that this unifying relationship can be established. Those things which place barriers in the way of the spirit within flowing through to the spirit in all, dissipate power. Those things which facilitate this unity among men and between God and man augment power.

This, then, is the power, the moral and spiritual power, on which Friends would place primary reliance. Characteristic of this power are the following features:

1. *Humility.* This arises from an awareness that the power used is not of the making of any individual or group. Individuals and groups are but channels through which the forces of the universe can be made to flow somewhat more freely or somewhat less freely by the efforts of men. What is done through such power is, thus, no occasion for gratitude to be shown to the doer, as his role is instrumental and not causative.

2. *Truth.* Every fact is a unit of the universe and an atom of power. A foreign policy of power must be based on the facts as known and on a humble search for additional data, additional truth, realizing that this is a never-ending search and that no individual or group can monopolize the great variety of approaches to truth.

3. *Justice.* Yes, but power rests more in the effort to do justice than it does in the effort to get justice.

4. *Purpose.* Spiritual power and moral power are not weapons. Spiritual power is not a tool to be picked up at will in support of any purpose at hand. The instrument and the purpose cannot be separated. Both are important and must be in harmony if moral and spiritual power is to be generated.

5. *Stockpiling.* Spiritual power, then, is not a commodity to be stockpiled or dissipated as can a supply of ammunition. Spiritual power is the product of a particular time, place, purpose, and set of relationships. It is

available or not as a result of a total situation, as a result of the unity which a given situation may have with the spiritual and moral order. It is a matter of the total quality of being, a matter of what an individual or a group is in relation to a specific set of circumstances.

6. *Confidence.* A characteristic which tends to distinguish spiritual power from material power is the fact that spiritual power can be wielded only by those who have confidence in it. It cannot be used in a timid or tentative manner, as a doubtful procedure used in the thought that if spiritual power seems inadequate for the purpose, the more orthodox instruments of material power will be held in reserve and called up as needed. It would be a mistake for a nation to attempt to rely entirely on moral and spiritual power as long as there is a widespread suspicion among the citizenry that military power might be more desirable.

7. *Center of Power.* As distinguished from material and mechanical power, spiritual power does not leave the individual, be it person or nation, in a position of irrelevance. As military efforts have grown in size, complexity and expense, there has been a tendency for the individual to be relegated to a position of impotence. The individual can add little to the aggregate of military power available or do little to influence the strategy of its use. This has been as true of nations as of persons. No single nation can go forward with a military venture in the modern world unless it is certain of the support of allies. The individual soldier is impotent until the army releases him for action, controlling both the timing and direction of such action. These things are not true of moral and spiritual power. Such power is a function of the relationship between individuals and God's moral order; it is available to the individual whenever the individual is ready. Any nation, likewise, can begin to base its foreign policy on spiritual power as soon as its citizenry is prepared, and need not wait for others before going forward.

8. *Inwardness of Power.* Moral and spiritual power influences others from within. Spiritual power is thus distinct from the more orthodox, coercive and deterrent concepts of power in that they function by bringing pressure to bear from the outside. This difference is basic and radical with respect to conceptions of political power. It has become habitual to speak of power in terms which equate political power with mechanical power. The very terms which have gained currency in such discussions are indicative: "balance of power," "power vacuum," "structure of power," "international frictions," and "depreciation of power." In such analyses, when the power exerted at one point is diminished, "the equilibrium of power" is disrupted

and the "power world" creates a new "balance" around a new "center of gravity." Power is thus seen as the energy which is exerted against each other by two or more opposing forces. "Realistic" politics then involves a decrease in the amount of power which may be mobilized against oneself and an increase in the amount at one's disposal to be mobilized against an adversary.

Such politics, to Friends, has seemed distinctly unrealistic. It deals with the superficials of behavior, relying on various modifications of the "stick" and "carrot" themes to deter or encourage the actions of others, but never reaching through to the motivational levels where hostilities, aggressions, and tensions can be outgrown or dissipated rather than merely controlled. Thus spiritual power is more akin to the power of growth than it is to mechanical power. It is akin to those powers of nature which activate the potential for growth in a seed lying dormant in the earth.

9. *Power and Victory.* Spiritual and moral power does not meet conflict situations with an effort to win the conflict. The effect of moral and spiritual power is to convert conflict situations into problem situations. Attention is distracted from mutually antagonistic goals of winning, to a mutually consistent objective, that of an agreed solution. Policy based on spiritual power would not see itself as in a squared ring with an opponent, but would see itself and the other party to a conflict situation as the opposite ends of a base line which can resolve and complete itself only by projecting either extremity to a different level where both may meet in an apex. A principle of indirection is at work here, a principle which runs through Quakerism, making it appear at times that Friends are less than candid and are reluctant to recognize problems which are obvious to others. To Friends, problems, relationships, paradoxes can never be resolved on their own level, but only through concentration on values and truth discerned at successively deeper (or higher) levels until, finally, all is resolved in an awareness and experience of the Spirit that is central to all.

10. *Power qua Power.* To complete our decalogue of characteristics of the spiritual power on which Friends would rely in formulating foreign policy, spiritual power cannot be sought as power. It is strictly derivative, incidental to another pursuit: the pursuit of truth and the fullest possible realization of the God within. Just as mercury slips through the fingers when seized directly, so, too, does the power on which Friends would rely. It is a by-product of a way of life, a way of life in which the direct pursuit of power can have no part and would, indeed, deny its basic nature. It is common enough for governments to establish boards of economic warfare

and boards of psychological warfare. There would be a fundamental contradiction in the creation of a Board of Spiritual Warfare. Derivative though spiritual power may be, Friends are clear that spiritual power is real, and that there is none greater. As the 1920 All Friends Conference reported: <sup>4</sup> "Friends have found a way of life which is divinely revealed, and which, therefore, is backed by the eternal nature of things." And as Thomas Kelly wrote: <sup>5</sup> "... God breaks through, miracles are wrought, world renewing . . . forces are released, history changes."

The fruits of these characteristics are generosity, patience, and the development of a profound respect for all peoples and their governments.

Based on these considerations, Friends have urged that foreign policy move in the following directions:

1. The extension and improvement of all forms of peaceful international intercourse. Emphasis here is placed on the expansion of international trade and the further development of public and private programs facilitating the international exchange of persons and information, programs of relief and reconstruction, and social and technical assistance.

2. Improvement of the machinery of international co-operation. International organizations should be supported to the extent that they foster international unity. The procedures for the conduct of negotiations, bilateral and multilateral, should be improved and emphasized as the central political function of the United Nations, in contrast to a preoccupation with powers of coercion. Though NATO provides machinery for international co-operation, Friends have opposed it as it was viewed as a fundamentally divisive force on the world scene. The practice of third-party settlement of disputes should be strengthened, Friends hold, as an available resource when direct negotiations become deadlocked. In this connection, Friends urge the further development of international law. The emphasis here, however, is on the development of agreed norms of behavior, not on strengthening the coercive sanctions behind the law.

3. A concerted effort in the area of the reduction and control of armaments. A national military establishment should be maintained only as long as public opinion remains apprehensive without one. Neither public nor the government should be encouraged to place their faith in military solutions, quite the contrary. In time the awareness will grow that a military establishment is not the most useful tool of foreign policy; that military power is essentially weak in contrast to the power from moral and spiritual resources.

<sup>4</sup> All Friends Conference, 1920, *Official Report*, London: Friends Book Shop, 1920, p. 47.

<sup>5</sup> Kelly, Thomas, *A Testament of Devotion*, Harper & Brothers, 1943, p. 47.



## CHALLENGE

Most critics of the Quaker approach take as their point of departure the charge that Friends have not faced the problem of evil. They charge that Friends have so emphasized their conviction that all men possess a potential for goodness, and that this goodness can be brought forth by appealing to it in its own terms, that Friends, to all intents and purposes, cope with evil by ignoring it. What would Friends do when there are forces at work which are able to destroy and intent on destroying the most fundamental values of life—destroying the framework within which the search for and the development of “the God in man” may be sought? Even if all possible respect, generosity, and patience were shown, there still would be injustice in the world and there still would be people inclined to seek their own or their nation’s advantage at the expense of others. While a certain amount of this sort of thing can be absorbed, is there not a point beyond which such cannot be absorbed and tolerated without destroying the very capacity to want to seek unity, truth, and justice?

The potential for evil in men, say these critics, is just as real as the potential for good. There is no certainty that the potential for evil may not be developed more quickly and more fully than the potential for good, that evil may not so intrench itself that it will become the norm, become a law unto itself, and create its own moral and natural order. Educational, economic, social, psychological, and even genetic controls have become sufficiently effective so that once a totalitarian government gains physical control, there is no domestic power strong enough to dislodge it. You cannot assume or appeal to goodness in men who possess such power, continue the critics of the Quaker approach; such power will itself corrupt those who hold it and make them impervious to appeals of goodness unsupported by force or the threat of force.

Furthermore, the critics proceed, on what evidence can Friends claim that coercion is not as much a part of the moral order as co-operation? Cannot, and in some cases, must not the moral order be furthered through the use of deterrents and coercion? Is the distinction between deterrent and transforming moral power as clear-cut as Friends infer? Given the fact of man’s universal sharing of responsibility for the world’s injustice, perversion of truth and willful ignorance, can any nation, any man, be sufficiently clear to be a channel for the workings of moral power, setting it to work in international relations? Is it not necessary for such imperfect men to content themselves with wielding the morally imperfect power of armies



and hydrogen bombs, if necessary, to save the world from falling into the clutches of an immorality so profound that it has the power to perpetuate itself, the power to pervert men's minds and stifle their souls generation after generation? And, too, cannot fear, the emotion to which deterrence and coercion appeal, be a salutary reaction? Cannot coercive measures then be used to create a healthy, restraining fear in individuals or nations inclined to embark on careers of evil?

#### AND RESPONSE

Friends would question several of the assumptions in these questions.

1. It is quite unlikely that "all respect, generosity, and patience" will have been exhausted. It is more likely that people will have become weary of well-doing while acting in their own power. Just as the power of gravity is always equal to the task of attracting two bodies to each other in a vacuum, so, too, is spiritual power equal to the demands of individual and social relationships, if we do not get in the way of it.

2. Friends would caution against the implication that any one nation or group of nations ever completely represents truth and justice and its opponents only varying degrees of untruth and injustice.

3. It is basic to the Quaker faith that the forces of disunity, untruth, and injustice ultimately will not and cannot prevail. Unity, truth, and justice are written into the laws of the universe.

Friends' response, then, to the question of what to do in the face of forces which would destroy the very essentials of unity, truth, and justice, is the more devoted and complete practice of unity, with unity's resultant truth and justice.

This does not represent an easy optimism. It means the utmost concentration on discovering what the requirements of unity, peace, and justice may be in a particular situation. It means, of course, a firm "no" to all that which is finally seen as of the forces of disunity. The price demanded in terms of lives lost and property damaged may be no less than in war, and with no greater promise of particular success than war can offer. It does mean, however, that such lives and property will be lost under conditions that favor an increased realization of unity, truth, and justice and, ultimately, the fullest possible development and respect for individual personality.

Does this mean that moral and spiritual power does not assure the survival of the nation which determines to rely on it? It does not; but no approach can. The military cannot guarantee that the forces of destruction

will be effectively deterred. Actually, for nations as for individuals, the only certainty is that survival is an illusion. The only real question concerns the time and circumstances of passing. Friends feel that it is important to develop a certain casualness about survival. Individuals are said to sense an ultimate security and power in the act of giving life in the service of that which is felt to be of ultimate value. So, too, may a nation, and even the system of nations, make its greatest contribution in voluntarily giving its life in the cause of unity, truth, and justice. Individuals and nations may thus find their reason for being, their fulfillment in the manner of their death. The North American States fulfilled themselves in the act of giving up their separate existence in union in 1789, and have seen their darkest days in their search for a more separate existence in 1861.

Friends respond to the charge that they are naïvely optimistic in their belief in the inherent goodness of man by objecting that they do not ignore evidences of injustice, perversions of truth, disunity, and other forms of evil among the nations. They point out that their effort, however, is not to destroy evil by a frontal attack, but to create situations that are incompatible with evil and as compatible as possible with evil's opposite: unity, truth, and justice. When injustice, disunity, and perversions of truth persist, say Friends, they can only be absorbed and will be but intensified by the compressive pressures of deterrence, coercion, and violence.

Friends feel that they have, as a matter of fact, a greater respect for the power of evil than have their critics, who often appear to think it sufficient to cope with evil by controlling its superficial manifestations. Friends insist that it is necessary to go deeper, to cope with evil at the point of internal motivation. Evil can only be overcome through the creation of a sense of oneness, evil by its very nature being divisive and incapable of existing to the extent that unity exists, unity between an individual and that Spirit in the image of which the individual was made, and unity of spirit among peoples. Friends also feel that their critics give evil too low a rating in as much as those critics usually assume that evil can be turned to good purposes, that the admitted evils of war can be tricked into producing good results. Friends deny that evil is so weak and malleable. Some good may issue from war, as there is some good mixed with all evil and some evil mixed with the best of human efforts, but good issues from the evil of war in spite of war and not because of it.

Friends feel, too, that their critics have too little confidence in the power of goodness. Friends are convinced that the fundamental pattern of life is such that men are destined to do those things which will make them

the tools of the ultimate triumph of truth over untruth, unity over disunity, in spite of the fact that any given man and any given nation but imperfectly serves and reflects these qualities. Friends thus believe that it would be quite impossible for evil to establish itself in perpetuity, even with all the support of modern totalitarian techniques. To hold to the contrary would be to hold that the ultimate forces of the universe are evil, can be made evil or at least made able to serve evil ends. This is not only untrue, to Friends, on the basis of their experience, but constitutes blasphemy as it implies that the ultimate spirit in the universe is either evil or impotent.

Friends would agree that coercion and deterrence, and the fear to which these forces appeal, have a place in the moral order and may even serve limited spiritual ends. The role that deterrence and coercion play in the moral order, however, has something in common with the role that bark and roots play in man's diet. When men are starving and there is nothing better to eat, it may be better to grub up roots and peel the bark off trees than to eat nothing, grow weak, and die. When men see evil, and have no better way of coping with it, it is better to use coercion and violence than to remain inactive and allow the moral sense to atrophy. But bark and roots make a poor diet, so poor that a man will die in any case, if better is not found quickly. To Friends, a fuller understanding of the relationship between political power and the belief in the essentially spiritual nature of life, an insight and belief shared by all of the world's great religions, is the only approach that will prove adequate to the needs of a nuclear age.

## Man and Automation

KERMIT EBY and JUNE GREENLIEF

MANY HUNDREDS OF YEARS before Christ, when the world was still young, a legend of the martyr-hero Prometheus took form among men. Prometheus stole the knowledge of fire from the gods in order to give it to mankind, and for his rebellion he was chained to Mt. Caucasus "where a vulture destroyed his liver . . . until Hercules set him free." Although chained, and as it were daily devoured, Prometheus emerged heroic and defiant in the cause of man, whose imagination he caught. Aeschylus wrote of him (*Prometheus Bound*) and Shelley, seeing his spirit in the French Revolution, sanctified him as the leader of the resistance against the Powers That Be (*Prometheus Unbound*).

Later eras came to regard the Promethean act as heroic but the gift of fire as a not unmixed blessing. Henry Adams, fascinated by the Exposition of 1900 in Paris, contemplated the possibilities of the dynamo displayed there in much the same way that a thoughtful Neanderthal man might have considered the discovery of fire: with a troubled mind and a worried heart. As a historian Adams was primarily interested in the contrast of the age of faith as against the age of the dynamo; he was deeply interested by Christian theology, which had changed the implications of the Promethean act. That first man, Adam, had also decided to eat of the tree of knowledge, but unlike Prometheus he sought to satisfy his curiosity rather than his desire for freedom; and Adam fell, not into proud resistance but into the painful knowledge of good and evil, into the reality of death and the horror of self-awareness. Adam's spiritual descendant, Dr. Faustus, was obliged to sell his soul to the devil in return for power, eternal youth, and the forbidden secrets of the universe. Henry Adams saw the Paris Exhibition as the Faustian will of Western man made concrete; here were on display the secrets already stolen or wrestled from a recalcitrant universe, and these displays were but powerful portents of things to come.

Henry Adams saw two great dramas running, like extended threads

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of culture, down the center of Western civilization: in essence, the drama of Faust, and that of Christ. Adams refers to these two themes in his well-known juxtaposition, the Virgin Mary and the dynamo: the age of faith and the age of reason. One of the deepest implications of the age of faith was that man, like Faust, would bring on his own self-destruction if he pushed beyond the limits of the known world, and that like Adam, he would unloose a new Pandora box of social-psychological ills, worse than those to which the flesh is already proverbially heir.

The two world views expressed themselves through varied doctrines: explorers and pioneers followed Prometheus and Faust; they charted new continents, made experiments, built the dynamo, harnessed the atom, constructed the revolutions. Eventually Christian thought accepted the dynamo, but with reservations. Christ, like Prometheus, championed mankind; but whereas Prometheus offered men freedom and rebellion, Christ desired to give them reconciliation with God and the realization of love. This is why it is implicit in Christian ideology that while the struggle with the gods of the sea and of darkness, of rain and of fire, goes on as in Promethean days, the deeper, darker, more terrifying struggle is within the heart of man. Within man rage and love, anger and compassion, fight for mastery; in rage men crucified Christ, and then proceeded to adore him.

As the First Industrial Revolution progressed, it became evident that it was not the dynamo which was either good or evil but the use to which it was put. The theme of man being devoured by the machine which he has created is a common one in the literature of Faustian man. E. M. Forster in *The Machine Stops* envisions a world wherein men become as smooth and heartless as The Machine which governs them and provides them with a religion (The Book of the Machine). In this world Faustian man with his thousand seething aspirations is as outmoded as Weltschmerz man or Romantic man. George Orwell in 1984 foresaw an equally horrible human condition, but with fewer fantasy elements about it. The famous world of H. G. Wells looked upon the machine with ambivalence: the dynamo could either save men from endless drudgery or destroy the world altogether, depending upon which way it was used. In a play of the 1920's, *RUR*, by Karel Capek, Rossum's Universal Robots are built by a group of scientists and sold all over the world to do the work of the human race; but constant improvement on the robots finally fits them out with brains, and there are so many of them that they unite and destroy humanity. Kapek chose a Christian answer to the dilemma: since the Robots can do everything but reproduce themselves, the miraculous reappearance of love among them



opens to them a biological answer, and a new human race develops from robot material.

As the Second Industrial Revolution follows hard upon the heels of the bomb over Hiroshima, and automation becomes an accomplished fact, the terrible paradox presses deep upon us. For the Faustian world is based upon the concept of the free flight of the individual through space—through space physical, mental, and spiritual. Individualism is as closely associated with aspirations toward more progress, more knowledge, more adventure as the age of faith is associated with a feudal and communal value system. It is because Christianity has set moral limitations to the universe that Faustian man has to make pact with the devil in order to put aside those limitations in his flight toward omniscience.

The paradox arises in the fact that although—beginning with Renaissance man—the individual has been more technically free to explore the universe, his institutions, like his technology, have risen up bigger than life, as if to smother him. Bigger than life, bigger than the skyscrapers, and more crushing has this institutional-technological matrix become, so that it almost seems that the Forsterian-Adams type of *gloomsayer* (as *Life* magazine would call him) might prove correct. The dynamo, like the automatic factory, is amoral; and it has long since been seen that—Christian theology aside—man cannot live without moral ballast.

Now the greatest, the most intense form of Faustian dynamics has so far appeared in the United States, which, with 6 per cent of the world's population, produces just about 50 per cent of the world's industrial output—a fact which, as Stuart Chase says, "emphasizes the desperate poverty of millions of Asians and Africans. It tends to make Americans too cocky and their neighbors too envious, and skews not only the economy, but human relations." How could both economics and human relations become unskewed? Chase answers, through the application of moral ballast; by cutting the Asians and Africans in on things, which means the creation of a just system of distribution, and on a planetary scale.

Nat Weinberg, Director of the Research and Engineering Department of the CIO, has said essentially the same thing, but from the viewpoint of the American labor movement.

Even a few management spokesmen are beginning to hint uneasily that something more may be needed than incantations to "natural economic forces" that "in the long run" will protect us against the horrors of mass technological unemployment.

Madison Avenue and high-pressure techniques cannot make profitable customers out of underpaid or disemployed workers. . . . The notion that the machine-product industries will absorb the workers displaced by the machine-using industries flies in the



face of two brutally hard facts. The first is that productivity is advancing by leaps and bounds in the capital equipment industries. . . . The second fact ignored by the optimists is that the productivity of capital as well as labor is increasing rapidly.

Periodically the ability of the economy to produce outruns the ability of the market to distribute. . . . The problem is clearly one of distribution, because the unmet needs of millions of American families, plus enormous national deficits in schools, hospitals, highways, resource developments, etc., plus the vast accumulation of needs of hundreds of millions outside our borders whose living standards are incredibly low, are sufficient to keep all our people, and all our machines, no matter how advanced, working at full capacity for many years, if not decades, to come.

Mr. Weinberg and *Life* (representing two points of view which are usually found on opposite sides of the question) are in this case caught in basic agreement on one side of the fence. They both agree that it is up to "democratic capitalism" to meet the challenge of the Second Industrial Revolution without the manifest horrors of the First. In an editorial for January 17, 1955, *Life* states that:

A whole new industry, now of three billion dollar proportions, has arisen out of automation. With a total of 2.7 million *not* working, we have been able to turn out and consume virtually as much goods as at the record heights of the boom. What this indicated is that the U.S. may be able to produce and consume at boom-time levels yet still have a "permanent reserve" of unemployment which may increase. . . . Industry must take care to pass on the gains of automation in shorter hours and higher wages. If and when automation makes it possible, labor may be entitled to press for such advances as the four-day week. Government recently has largely confined its recession-antidote public works projects to blueprinting the possibilities. Now it ought to draw a line—perhaps the present line of 2.7 million—above which unemployment will not be allowed to go without putting more of these projects into concrete. Fortunately, nearly all such measures can be made in capital improvements—new highways, schools, better housing, etc.—which will eventually pay for themselves by what they add to the income and brainpower of the economy. Since most of it ought to be done anyway, doing it now will keep us busy enough to defer the problems of greater leisure.

In other words, both Weinberg, speaking for the CIO, and *Life*, representing (more or less) management, agree on a somewhat New Dealish solution to the bellyaches and consternations of the Second Industrial Revolution. *Life*—if it still accurately represents the thinking of management—has come a long way in accepting a 1930-ish solution to the problems of the 1950's. Weinberg reflects the prevailing paradox among the "mixed economy" thinkers in the CIO, who on the one hand realize that the problem is indeed one of distribution, and who on the other hand suggest the timid solution of *Life*: build more expressways, raise wages, and cut hours, look into unemployment insurance for those 2.7 million.

What the holders of this viewpoint neglect to mention is that so far the capitalist economy, mixed, democratic, or otherwise, has not changed

the distributive system much since the first Phoenician traders set out to sell their goods for the best prices along the Mediterranean Sea. Thinking men of the 1930's understood that something was a bit mad with the distributive system; it was an obvious fact at a time when, although people all over the world lacked food and shelter, coffee was dumped off the docks of Brazil and cotton burned on the Gulf Coast in order to keep prices high.

The First Industrial Revolution, now fading into the Second, has not at any time made the poor richer or the rich poorer. Money has changed hands, certainly, and rich men have gone bankrupt in this country while poor boys have become bank presidents, but this is not the same thing. The fabled American spirit of optimism and belief in progress seems to rest mainly on the idea that money can change hands more rapidly here than elsewhere, not on any hope that there will be an actual redistribution of income. In Spain, where there are national lotteries, people also believe that they can get rich quick.

The distribution of income in the United States is essentially the same as it was in 1910, when the upper fifth of income units received 46.2 per cent of money income, and the lower fifth 8.3 per cent. In the 1950 census it was recorded that the highest fifth of income families and unrelated individuals in the United States received 47 per cent of the total income, as contrasted to the 3 per cent received by the lowest fifth. Taxes, often suggested as a panacea for the fact that the poor seem to get a bit poorer all the time, don't seem to have much effect, because in 1950 the highest tenth of the income units received 29 per cent of all money income before taxes; after taxes they got 27 per cent. Meanwhile, the second highest tenth received 15 per cent before taxes and 15 per cent after. The top-heaviness of this income ratio is further increased by the fact that .6 per cent of all American families own 80 per cent of all publicly held corporation stock.

Automatic factories, electronic office devices, and the building of atomic power plants will not, in the foreseeable future, decentralize this already heavily concentrated source of power. The trend in the United States has been toward bigger government, bigger business, bigger unionism; automation will increase the possibilities of that trend. It costs money to build a big atomic reactor, currently about \$60,000,000 worth of money; it costs a great deal of money to automatize a factory. On the basis of cost alone, it is not likely that either automation or the building of atomic reactors will fall into the hands of any but the largest corporative units. Those large corporation units are already Gargantuan. In 1947, according to the Federal Trade Commission, 46 per cent of all the manufacturing property, plant,

and equipment used in the United States was owned by the 113 largest corporations. One hundred corporations received two thirds of the dollar volume of war contracts during the Second World War; in the Korean war, *fifty* corporations got two thirds of the dollar volume. According to the Statistical Abstracts of 1952, there were 2,462 mergers in mining and manufacturing from 1940 to 1947, precisely double the number of mergers for the period between 1920 and 1928.

Not only is automation expensive; it is practical only on a large scale, a further indication that widespread automation will simply give the giant corporations a new lever by which to squeeze out their smaller competitors. These giants will, meanwhile, tend to centralize from within. Automatized forms of bookkeeping, communication, computing, will make it possible for all administrative functions to be performed in one central office, whereas up to now most giant industries have operated from a number of geographically spread-out branch and subsidiary offices.

Widespread automation can, then, easily destroy competition, and competition is one of the keystone concepts of the capitalist working under "natural economic laws." Competition is "good" in most American capitalist theories because it is based on the idea that the good material, efficiently distributed, will eventually drive out the bad, and that the law of supply and demand will prove more efficient than any planning apparatus.

With the constant trend toward narrowing of competition comes also the narrowing of the possibilities for "individualism." "Competition" and "individualism" have been inextricably linked in an economic sense by modern capitalist theorists. But the era of economic individualism, of the bold Faustian entrepreneur, is evidently over. Since democracy means the diffusion of power in society over as wide an area as possible, the era of democracy as we know it may very well be over also. It is perfectly implausible for Soviet apologists to protest that the people of the Soviet Union have "economic democracy" at the cost of "political democracy." It is equally implausible to suggest that Americans can have political democracy without some form of economic decentralization of power. At no time has it been possible to separate political from economic power.

As things—both economic and political—become every day, in every way, bigger and bigger, the outlook for the individual becomes dimmer and dimmer. As institutional frameworks grow huger and more impersonal, the damage done to the individual psyche is very great. Man, the individual, still lives in a highly personalized world; he still lives with the love and hate, the compassion and anger, the rage and pity, of the pre-

Promethean. Man, the sociological animal, still lives within and gains warmth from small primary groups, familial ties, some kind of community framework, a circle of friends. His political structure remains archaic and, on a global scale, anarchistic. The possibly fatal irony of this predicament is illustrated in a headline from the *Los Angeles Times* for January 23, 1955: "Trip to Moon Held Possible by 1965. Delay May Be Caused, However, by Concentration on War Weapons."

Man, the ethical being, is still a creature which cannot live without limits. Reinhold Niebuhr, writing in the *Saturday Review of Literature* for December 18, 1954, states the age-old theological reasons for distrusting not only Faust but what he defines as "modern Socratic culture."

Much evil is undoubtedly done in sheer stupidity, but the basic human problem is the constant expression of the self's pride, will-to-power, and avarice. Bertrand Russell defines the basic human inclination as the desire for "power and glory." That is probably as good a definition of sin as any . . . which any thoughtful observer must recognize as being more illuminating about man, particularly man in his contemporary setting than all the Socratic interpretations which try to derive virtue from intelligence.

The conception of the self's freedom to defy the laws of its own existence is part and parcel of the Christian conception of the self's radical freedom, particularly its freedom over its own mind. In short, the self has a mystery which cannot be equated with its reason. The self uses its reason but is not reason. The self has the freedom to transcend nature and reason to survey all the world's coherences and rational intelligibilities and to inquire after the source and end of the meaning of its existence. This freedom either proves the existentialists right in their insistence that the self has no law but its freedom; or it points to the validity of the Biblical faith that there is a deeper and higher source of meaning than the coherences discovered by science and philosophy. . . .

The modern "Socratic" culture . . . even if it acknowledged the reality and the "dignity" of human selfhood . . . never came to terms with the "misery" of man. Briefly, that "misery" is man's inclination to use his freedom not as the instrument of virtue, but as a tool of self-glorification, and consequently as an instrument of social strife and injustice.

The conquest of the moon may be near; the conquest of man's inner misery is evidently not near. Yes, said E. M. Forster in considering the question, the struggle is within the soul of man, but I see no "change of heart" bursting upon us in the sudden future. If love and curiosity build the world, pain and hate destroy it; all great religious movements have been built upon the control of rage and pain for a larger purpose; all great religious movements have implied also that the change of heart, the leap of faith, can happen. Experience tells us that it does happen—but to individuals. Masses of men may take up, at any given time, enthusiasm for some cause; only individuals are able to cast out fear through love.

The left-wing Protestant approach is a synthesis of rationalism and Christianity. "The left wing," says Roland Bainton, "is composed of those who separated church and state and rejected the civil arm in matters of religion." If the autonomy of the individual in matters of religion is accepted, then the autonomy of the individual in political and secular affairs must be recognized. This concern for individual moral perfection in the context of his institutional arrangements means, briefly, that the individual is more important than the wealthiest corporation or the most efficient automatic factory. His institutions are for his use, and not vice versa. Thus, for the left-wing Protestant, society like the individual is always under examination and re-examination, and is always subject to the possibility of change, both radical and gradual. If an individual cannot be permitted free flight through moral space, neither can a society. Left-wing Protestant theory is based upon the idea that individuals must make choices (through the radical freedom of the self) and must take the consequences of those choices. This means that individuals can act sincerely within the Church only in terms of their faith; it means that the Church itself will, if it is to be effective, remain always in tension with the wider society.

Following this thought out further, into the political sphere, it is obvious that if something is wrong with the distributive system, that system should and can be changed. For, as John Stuart Mill has pointed out, there are no natural economic laws which govern society. Rather society makes its own laws, according to the desires, the necessities, the exigencies of the time. And contrary to common belief, we do not think that the distributive system is not put right because it is against some people's *best interest*. We think that democratic socialism would provide some of the answers for both skewed human relations and wacky economics, but we do not see any real possibilities of such an answer or series of answers being put into effect soon. And *not* because self-interest is at stake. Because in the real, the logical sense, the self-interest of Asia right now is also the self-interest of America. Rather, the real barrier to enlightened self-interest is, oddly enough, the very evil and stupidity about which Niebuhr speaks. Men will fight bloody and profitless wars or spend their time at less bloody but equally wearing and equally foolish feuds for no apparently cogent reason. They will do such things often enough, at the risk of their own survival, against their own "best interests." A great deal of evil, as Niebuhr says, is done out of sheer stupidity; a great deal of evil is also done out of sheer perversity and emotional imbalance.

It is this profound perversity of the human race which can work,



paradoxically, both for and against it. In theological terms, when this perversity works in certain ways, it is *alienation* from God. On the other hand, when it shows itself as a profound determination to set aside all man-made barriers in an effort to find God, it is a kind of single-minded blessedness. Indeed, so perverse and paradoxical is man that he makes a hero out of Prometheus, the image of pride and defiance, and a God out of Christ, the image of humility and love.

Go down to River Rouge in Detroit. River Rouge is just a plain factory, of the First Industrial Revolution. It hasn't been automatized yet. And yet one's reaction on surveying it is perhaps as uniquely intense as was that of Henry Adams at the Paris exhibition. River Rouge is a world in itself; its hugeness goes without saying; industrially it is self-sufficient, with its own steel mills, its own ninety-nine miles of railroad tracks. Thousands of men and women drive to that plant during both the day and the night, for unless there is an economic depression, the plant never rests. These men and women drive to work in cars, their work consists of putting together parts for cars on the assembly line, and when they are through on their shift they drive home in cars. The vastness and complexity of this system, as viewed from the outside, is overwhelming. We have heard tales of engineers who would work twenty-four hours a day, if need be, to keep the system in shape; their loyalty was not to Ford, not to River Rouge certainly, but to the idea of the system. You would think, looking at River Rouge, that the men and women going in through the doors exist only for the greater efficiency of the system.

A lot of men and women began to feel that way back in 1937. They were feeding the robots all right, but the robots weren't feeding them much in return except a cold mess of pottage. And people, being perverse, are usually prone to want more than they can get legally under any system. The robots didn't warm these people; the robots didn't give them spiritual comfort; nor did the robots hold forth with either love or its milder counterpart, the milk of human kindness. The Machine gave to the men who tended it only what was legally required—a mess of cold pottage.

So back in 1937 people up and kicked the Machine in the guts; they said, "We'll prove to you who's master here," and they sat down at the machines. And sure enough, the machine stopped. The men who owned the machines yelled bloody murder; policemen marched in the streets of Flint and Detroit; strikers marched too, or just kept sitting on their haunches. The governor was unhappy and the president was upset, but the Machine stopped. And the men didn't go back to work until they had



assured themselves that they could stop the Machine whenever they wished.

In any speculation of things to come in an increasingly automatized world, we must take into account this perverse desire of men to be masters of their own fate (and quite often, unfortunately, masters of everyone else's fate too). Historically left-wing Protestantism has attempted to come to terms with this perversity by predicating a near-impossibility: that as an individual, man is master of his own soul and that he stands naked, without intercessor, before his God. Whereas the Faustian world view holds that man is capable of infinite progress past the natural limits of the universe, Protestant theology is (like Christian theology generally, but only more so) simply antinatural. As Ortega y Gasset remarked about the political philosophy of Liberalism, it is antinatural and antihuman because it assumes peaceful co-existence with the opposition, and most astoundingly, co-existence with a *weak* opposition which could be easily wiped out. For a good many years Christian philosophy and the Christian regimen has run roughshod over mankind's deeper animal desires—sexual, emotional, and in some cases even intellectual—in the name of the ideal. Christianity has never succeeded in making the ideal reality; it has certainly succeeded in making the ideal *real*, like a thorn always pressing against the heart, for millions of its followers. And in this matter, of course, Protestantism goes Catholicism one better. Because whereas Catholic philosophy, both in theory and practice, assumes that man's animal nature will win out whenever he is not closely watched and guided by the omnipresent agents of the Church, Protestantism has made a specialty of the built-in conscience, which causes great guilt and discomfort whether or not anyone is looking.

Thus, speaking from the historical position of Protestantism and despite all evidence to the contrary, we would insist on respecting the mind; we would insist on holding the lonely idealism of our belief that men can be better than they are. When applied specifically to automation, this means that this gift of Faustian technologists need not be used in the old way, to further the greed and stupidity of the few. Because life among men has always been predicated upon the impossible, that is the belief, the desire, the dream (and in a sense the ultimate reality) that life is different than it is. All the great world views have been predicated on this assumption, and all the great dramas have mirrored it. Thus Oedipus, who makes the distinction between the so-called real world and true insight; thus Christ, the image of the ideal; thus Moses, who would give a standard to which the just might repair.

Such dramas and ideals hardly mirror the exact and dully fitful routine

of our daily lives, which seem only at crisis points to be directly concerned with true sight, with sin, salvation, crucifixion, repentance, heroism, and cowardice. But perhaps (and again speaking from the old left-wing Protestant tradition) we are inclined to believe that it is the tawdry acceptance of Things-as-They-Are which is at fault, and not the great dramas. For most people, no matter how commonplace, how seemingly negative, have acted on some dim or brilliant, conventional or strange, vague or precise vision of what life should be. And in this sense, what we insist on calling necessity usually turns out to be less a question of circumstance than of inertia.

### *"The Kingdom of God Is a Dear Truth"*

WALTER RAUSCHENBUSCH

To those whose minds live in the social gospel, the Kingdom of God is a dear truth, the marrow of the gospel, just as the incarnation was to Athanasius, justification by faith alone to Luther, and the sovereignty of God to Jonathan Edwards. It was just as dear to Jesus. . . . He too lived in it, and from it looked out on the world and the work he had to do.

Jesus always spoke of the Kingdom of God. Only two of his reported sayings contain the word "Church," and both passages are of questionable authenticity. It is safe to say that he never thought of founding the kind of institution which afterward claimed to be acting for him.

Yet immediately after his death, groups of disciples joined and consolidated by inward necessity. Each local group knew that it was part of a divinely founded fellowship mysteriously spreading through humanity, and awaiting the return of the Lord and the establishing of his Kingdom. . . .

The Kingdom was merely a hope, the Church a present reality. The chief interest and affection flowed toward the Church. The beloved ideal of Jesus became a vague phrase which kept intruding from the New Testament. Like Cinderella in the kitchen, it saw the other great dogmas furnished up for the ball, but no prince of theology restored it to its rightful place. The Reformation, too, brought no renaissance of the doctrine of the Kingdom; it had only eschatological value, or was defined in blurred phrases borrowed from the Church. . . . When the doctrine of the Kingdom of God shriveled to an undeveloped and pathetic remnant in Christian thought, this loss was bound to have far-reaching consequences."

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From *A Rauschenbusch Reader*, ed. by B. Y. Landis, Harper & Brothers, 1957, pp. 111-112 (quoted from *A Theology for the Social Gospel*). Used by permission.

# The Social Philosophy of Paul Tillich

ROBERT E. FITCH

MANY SECULAR and most religious thinkers would agree that Paul Tillich gives us the most distinguished mind in systematic philosophy in the United States today. His vision is marked by breadth and catholicity as well as by a sensitive awareness of all the variegated details of life. It has been brought under the discipline of logic, metaphysics, and epistemology, so that it takes on a clearly articulated structure. And it is expressed in a style of extraordinary beauty, precision, and eloquence, which at times even takes on a lyrical intensity of utterance.

But while our attention is presently fixed upon his ontology and theology, it may be a good moment to look back at the social philosophy which first engaged his interest, but which seems not to have been his major concern in recent years. To what extent the impulse behind his social philosophy is akin to the impulse behind his ontology may be an interesting question.

## I. *GESTALTEN ÜBER ALLES*

The clue to Tillich lies in the Teutonic talent for the *Einsicht* (insight) and in the Teutonic passion for the *Gestalt* (whole). The first function of an insight is to perceive a whole. Its auxiliary function is to perceive the parts in their relation to a whole. The main business of philosophy is the rational articulation of the parts in their subordination to the larger whole. By the same token, if the philosopher is concerned with the whole, then the critic is concerned with the holes in the whole.

It is interesting to note Tillich's fondling of assorted *Gestalten*, or wholes, as he develops his thought over the years. Quite early he welcomes gestalt psychology, speaks later of a gestalt of grace, takes note of the gestalt of Prussian bureaucracy, begins to thrill to an over-all gestalt of meaning. One of his more pretentious gestalts is The Protestant Era. Still another that intrigues him is the gestalt of Religion and Culture. He is obviously pleased when he makes the discovery that now there is real meaning to the gestalt which we call "the world." So he can polish off the Spirit of Capi-

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talism in a phrase, and serve up the Age of Reason in one paragraph of compact eloquence. Then there are the various Onomies, The-, Aut-, and Heter-, which define the relationship of culture to divine, or to ecclesiastical, or to human authority. In due time we come across the Collectivisms, primitive, semi-, and neo-, which deal with savage, medieval, and totalitarian societies. And of course there is Mass Man. And to top it all off, there is what might possibly be called mass metaphysics, or Ontology.

When it comes to Tillich's general social philosophy, however, it must be recorded that here we find no finished gestalt. All we have are the assorted *Einsichten*, or insights, put forth with brilliance and persuasiveness in a series of unrelated essays. In what follows I have tried to present the essential of his views on capitalist democracy and on religious socialism; to gather together some of his observations on literature, art, education, politics, economics, philosophy; to see what it all adds up to, and then to make some assessment of the total picture.

## II. CRITIQUE OF BOURGEOIS, CAPITALIST DEMOCRACY

Tillich recognizes, as though in passing, that the merit of capitalist society is that it embodies "the recognition of the sacredness of personality . . . the faith in human rights and human worth."<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, it is a symbol of "self-sufficient finitude,"<sup>2</sup> and the personality it fosters is of the humanist, rational, autonomous variety. This "tends to cut the individual off from his existential roots, from the social group, its traditions and symbols. It tends to make him abstract-universal and detached from any concrete concern; everything interests, nothing affects."<sup>3</sup> The result has been the annihilation of community:

The family disintegrated into individuals each of whom lives for himself in the service of the mechanism of society. Communities of workers were replaced by mass coöperation of a non-personal character. Patriarchal responsibility for the servant, his welfare and his loyalty, gave way to the relations of legal contract. Neighborhood as a form of community lost its meaning. . . . Even the community of friendship was destroyed by the universal sway of competition. . . . The service of the mechanism of mass production is not a possible spiritual center for community.<sup>4</sup>

Capitalism destroys the meaning of property as it destroys the meaning of persons.

<sup>1</sup> *The Religious Situation*, tr. H. R. Niebuhr, Henry Holt & Co., 1932, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>3</sup> *The Protestant Era*, tr. J. L. Adams, University of Chicago Press, 1948, p. 130.

<sup>4</sup> Essay on "The World Situation" in *The Christian Answer*, ed. by Henry P. Van Dusen, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1945, p. 13.

In the free market economy the attitude toward material things comes to be dominating, loveless, without the sense of community with them. Things become wares—objects whose meaning lies in the production of profits . . . not in the enrichment of the personal life. . . . In the past man's relation to material things was hallowed by reverence and awe, by piety toward and gratitude for his possessions. . . . The ware, on the other hand, is a symbol of the infinite finitude of the pure desire to exercise rulership.<sup>5</sup>

Also, the apparent liberation of the person by capitalism from "the bonds of animal existence" turns out to be a deeper enslavement to "engage in unending, ever-increasing, life-consuming activity in the service of unlimited wants."<sup>6</sup>

On the American scene this results in the glorification of production for its own sake. "It is not the tools and gadgets that are the *telos* . . . ; it is the production itself."<sup>7</sup> The resulting spiritual impoverishment gives us the Mass Man. "For the mass is formed by soldering together atomized individuals which have lost all individual quality. . . . The mechanized mass and its instinctive movements are the terrible, destructive by-products of the demonic element in the capitalist spirit."<sup>8</sup>

In this scheme of things education is primarily for adjustment—"adjustment to the existing society. Everyone must receive public school education, everyone must learn those skills most useful for success in the mechanism of production. . . . The cultural achievements of the past wove an idealistic veil over the nakedness of this education and hid the face of Leviathan who was its real master."<sup>9</sup> Hence the cult of democratic conformism: political democracy, scientific progress, popular education, all become means to this end. "And the history of Protestantism confirmed the belief of the Reformers that the free encounter of everybody with the Bible can create an ecclesiastical conformity."<sup>10</sup>

The philosophy appropriate to this culture is pragmatism, which is "almost a picturesque expression of that attitude of domination over things which prevails in capitalist society, but it is neither critical nor rationalistic. . . . These ideas . . . indicate the pre-critical but also the fundamentally pre-spiritual character of the American mind."<sup>11</sup> We learn also that pragmatism "surrenders the criteria of truth and the good no less than does vitalistic philosophy. . . . The question of what kind of life creates ethical

<sup>5</sup> *The Religious Situation*, pp. 72-73.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 74.

<sup>7</sup> *The Courage to Be*, Yale University Press, 1952, p. 108.

<sup>8</sup> *The Religious Situation*, p. 77.

<sup>9</sup> *The Christian Answer*, p. 16.

<sup>10</sup> *The Courage to Be*, p. 115.

<sup>11</sup> *The Religious Situation*, pp. 47-48.



experience and what the standards of a true ethical experience are is not answered and can not be answered within the context of pragmatic thought."<sup>12</sup>

The literature of capitalism is illustrated by Zola, Ibsen, and Flaubert. Of Zola Tillich says: "The spirit of scientific, rationalistic observation dominates his style completely: the scientific attitude threatens constantly to overpower the literary attitude. . . . The self-sufficient finitude of bourgeois society is criticized with tremendous passion but the standard of criticism is that finitude itself. . . ."<sup>13</sup> Typical of capitalist painting is Sargent's portrait of Henry P. Marquand: "This naturalistic personality was formed by the demands of modern economy, and by neither divinity nor humanity."<sup>14</sup>

Of course capitalism contains the seeds of its own destruction, so we find the rebels and the critics within its own culture. There develops, for instance, an anticapitalist pedagogy, a movement which most of us know as "progressive education," which has some merit in the effort to restore the sense of community, but which Tillich finds deficient in "holy meanings."<sup>15</sup> Expressionism and surrealism in art reflect the meaninglessness of capitalist culture. "The category of substance is lost: solid objects are twisted like ropes; the causal interdependence of things is disregarded: things appear in a complete contingency. . . . The organic structures of life are cut into pieces which are arbitrarily recomposed. . . ."<sup>16</sup>

"Three great warriors" against the capitalist spirit were Nietzsche, Strindberg, and Van Gogh. In spite of the naturalism of Nietzsche's philosophy, it "contained a demonic transcendence . . . which was absolutely repulsive to the capitalist spirit."<sup>17</sup> But it was all three, the philosopher, the poet, and the painter, who "were broken mentally and spiritually in their desperate struggle with the spirit of capitalist society."<sup>18</sup>

### III. SALVATION BY RELIGIOUS SOCIALISM

Redemption from the capitalist spirit comes to us by way of Karl Marx and the Christ. Tillich realizes that Marxism differs crucially from Christianity in its dependence on immanent processes, and in its lack of any

<sup>12</sup> *The Protestant Era*, pp. 152-153.

<sup>13</sup> *The Religious Situation*, pp. 62-63.

<sup>14</sup> *The Christian Answer*, p. 11.

<sup>15</sup> *The Religious Situation*, pp. 115-116.

<sup>16</sup> *The Courage to Be*, pp. 146-147.

<sup>17</sup> *The Religious Situation*, p. 67.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

notion of eternity breaking into time.<sup>19</sup> But just before noting briefly this difference he has elaborated in some detail the basic affinities between Christianity and Marxism. Both see man as a social being. For both, salvation and damnation are universal and historical. For both, the idea of truth forbids any separation of theory and practice.<sup>20</sup>

Tillich also finds merit in the doctrine of economic materialism when it is properly understood.

Economic materialism does not mean that the "economic" which is itself a complex reality, embracing all sides of human existence, could be the sole cause of all phases of human life. That would be meaningless. Economic materialism shows rather the fundamental significance of economic structures and motives for the social and intellectual forms and changes of a period . . . and thereby confirms the theological insight, neglected by idealism, that man lives on earth and not in heaven.<sup>21</sup>

Like some other liberals he was able to greet early Soviet communism as the emancipation of the individual. In 1934 he wrote:

The motivating force . . . is not the state but the individual and the full development of his collectivistic activities. . . . The totalitarian character of the Soviet state, therefore, is to be understood . . . as the education of an entire continent in communistic enlightenment. Every step forward in this educational process means essentially a strengthening of the critical anti-authoritarian and anti-totalitarian forces among the people.<sup>22</sup>

In due time he recognized that what "had been conceived as a movement for the liberation of everyone, has been transformed into a system of enslavement of everyone, even of those who enslaved the others."<sup>23</sup> He became aware, also, that the totalitarian state had taken over a religious function.<sup>24</sup> But he could explain this outcome in tyranny only as a peculiar process of "distortion." Marx might possibly be held responsible for this in part, yet "it must be acknowledged by religious socialism that Marx is right in emphasizing material reproduction as the foundation of the whole historical process."<sup>25</sup> This important insight, however, is not to be "distorted" into mechanistic economics or into metaphysical materialism.

What Tillich hoped to develop was a Marxism purified by Christian insight. This was the movement of religious socialism. Tillich tells us that he kept personally aloof from the league of religious socialists—"under the

<sup>19</sup> *The Protestant Era*, p. 256.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 255.

<sup>21</sup> *The Interpretation of History*, tr. Rasetzki & Talmey, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936, p. 65.

<sup>22</sup> *The Theology of Paul Tillich*, ed. by Kegley & Bretall, The Macmillan Company, 1952, pp. 320-321.

<sup>23</sup> *The Courage to Be*, p. 153.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

<sup>25</sup> *The Protestant Era*, v. 258.

impression that the theoretical foundations were not laid deep enough."<sup>26</sup> Yet he was convinced that the church must become entangled in the realities of class conflict:

Apologetics, without any regard to this class opposition such as the Church was attempting, was condemned to complete failure from the very beginning. A successful activity on the part of the defenders of Christianity was possible only by their active participation in the class situation, i.e., apologetics among the proletarian masses was and is possible only to "Religious Socialism." Not Home Missions, but Religious Socialism is the necessary form of Christian activity among the proletarian workingmen, and is in particular the necessary form of Christian Apologetics.<sup>27</sup>

Tillich saw the Religious Socialists as part of a comprehensive spiritual movement which could bring under criticism some of the political and economic fetishes of Marxism. "They reject the naïve sense of absoluteness of the socialist party. . . ." <sup>28</sup> Or again, religious socialism

did not consider the economic factor as an independent one on which all social reality is dependent. It recognized the dependence of economy itself on all other social, intellectual and spiritual factors. . . . We understood socialism as a problem not of wages but of a new theonomy in which the question of wages, of social security, is treated in unity with the question of truth, of spiritual security.<sup>29</sup>

While the details of the new order might remain obscure, Tillich was clear about the essentials. The productive capacities of mankind are to be used for the advantage of everyone. The vicious circle of production of means as ends is to be broken. The creative powers of the soul are to be liberated from the fear, despair, and meaninglessness of ruthless competition. Neither religious utopianism nor religious escapism is tolerable. The totalitarian solution is also rejected. "Christianity must support plans for economic reorganization which promise to overcome the antithesis of absolutism and individualism, even if such plans imply a revolutionary transformation of the present social structure and the liquidation of large vested interests."<sup>30</sup>

While the Kingdom of God is not to be fully established on earth, nevertheless Religious Socialism may have its *Kairos*:

The term is meant to express the fact that the struggle for a new social order cannot lead to a fulfillment such as is meant by the Kingdom of God but that at a special time special tasks are demanded, and one special aspect of the Kingdom of God appears as a demand and expectation. . . . Thus the decision for Socialism during a

<sup>26</sup> *The Interpretation of History*, p. 20.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

<sup>28</sup> *The Religious Situation*, pp. 81-82.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xviii.

<sup>30</sup> *The Christian Answer*, pp. 21-22.

definite period may be the decision for the Kingdom of God, even though the Socialist ideal remains infinitely distant from the Kingdom of God.<sup>31</sup>

#### IV. THE HOLES IN THE WHOLE

In order to be fair in my judgment of Tillich's social philosophy, I suppose I should confess that I approach his *Gestalten* with the incorrigibly empirical-pragmatic bias of the dominant Anglo-American tradition. In brief I share in the "pre-critical" and "pre-spiritual" temper of a James, a Dewey, and a Niebuhr. And I do find it strange that Tillich could have lived in this country for so long, and have been both colleague and friend of Reinhold Niebuhr, and yet never have come to the most rudimentary understanding of the philosophic heritage of his adopted land.

It is just possible that he is proud that he does not learn too easily from experience. For instance, he boasts as follows of his intransigent Lutheranism:

I have never stood on the borders of Lutheranism and Calvinism, not even now, after having experienced the fatal consequences of the Lutheran social ethics and having had occasion to see the inestimable value of the Calvinistic doctrine of the idea of the Kingdom of God for the solution of social problems. The substance of my religion is and remains Lutheran. It embodies the consciousness of the "corruption" of existence, the repudiation of every social utopia, including the metaphysics of progress, the knowledge of the irrational demonic character of life, an appreciation of the mythical elements of religion, and a repudiation of Puritan legality in individual and social life. Not only my theological, but also my philosophical thinking expresses the Lutheran substance.<sup>32</sup>

Here we can only remark that, along with a perfectly commendable loyalty to the religious teaching of Lutheranism, Tillich also exhibits the classical Lutheran ineptitude in Christian social ethics.

The first general criticism to be made is that Tillich's *gestalts* are too simple, too inclusive, too pretentious. None is more pretentious than the so-called "Protestant Era." There never was such a Protestant "Era." As for what is supposed to be the "Protestant Principle," it is only one among several important Protestant principles, and the particular principle which he enunciates is no more peculiar to Protestantism than it is to the great Hebrew prophets. Indeed, if one has any kind of respect for the facts of history, he is constantly interrupted, in his reading of Tillich, by having to pause and to ask just when or where does or did this *gestalt* in fact exist, and how can some of the details alleged to fall into place as parts of a larger whole ever be conceivably connected with the more inclusive framework?

<sup>31</sup> *The Interpretation of History*, pp. 57-58.

<sup>32</sup> *The Interpretation of History*, p. 54.

Surely it is fantastic to present Nietzsche, Strindberg, and Van Gogh as men who were "broken mentally and spiritually in their desperate struggle with the spirit of capitalist society." Two of them had an inherent disposition to insanity, and the first one died of an acquired or syphilitic insanity. Naturally if we can blame every ill of this sort on "capitalism," then one can understand how a philosopher would rejoice in so universal an alibi.

We must also suspect that Tillich's inability to see any of the positive values in capitalism rests simply on the fact that capitalism provides no truly satisfactory gestalt. It is only in pure theory that capitalism makes a system; in practice it is more like anarchy. But socialism is system in theory and in practice; here everything falls into place. So Tillich remarks: "The metaphysical attitude of capitalist society is the rejection of metaphysics."<sup>33</sup> The historian of ideas must say that such a statement is simply contrary to fact. What Tillich may say, if he pleases, is that capitalism rejects the "true metaphysics." Naturally, with a bias in favor of the gestalt, Tillich speaks with enthusiasm of religious socialism. But in spite of the long and intimate interrelationship between capitalism and Protestantism in history, it never enters his head to speak of religious capitalism. Nor does he give any indication at all of appreciating what today is called "democratic capitalism"—a phrase which must command our attention because it designates the two historic forces, political democracy and capitalist economics, the union of which determines the present character of American society.

Tillich's inability to appreciate capitalism is one with his inability to appreciate political democracy. The explanation is the same in each case: both sin against the gestalt; both are too individualistic. Indeed, it is amazing to come to the end of a careful reading of all of Tillich's observations in social philosophy, and to discover that nowhere and at no time has he so much as indicated an awareness of the basic institutions, principles, and procedures of political democracy. Naturally he cannot be expected to provide an elaboration of such affairs when he does not even acknowledge their existence. Implicit must be the assumption that democracy, like capitalism, is just another bourgeois institution, and that it, too, must pass away with the coming of a better order of things. Explicit is only one remark about democracy—the critique of "democratic conformism" cited above. And here I must ask: Is there anything more conformist, anything more suggestive of the mass mind, than a group of like-minded liberals gathered together to celebrate in ritual phrase and in calcified cliché the

<sup>33</sup> *The Religious Situation*, p. 49.



"conformism" of those who do not conform to the approved liberal conformities?

Indeed, the only evil which can really fire the imagination of Tillich is the evil of a broken gestalt. So he speaks of "mass disintegration" and of "meaninglessness."

In such a situation the individual differentiations and integrations of groups and personalities are supplanted by identical mass attitudes; special traditions are forgotten, old symbols become powerless; a meaningful personal life, especially among the masses of industrial workers, has become impossible. . . . The meaninglessness of existence is perhaps the most characteristic phenomenon of the period of late capitalism.<sup>34</sup>

Tillich's special concern is to note how the meaninglessness and emptiness and disintegration are reflected in some of the fine arts. And in spite of personal involvement in worthy causes, it is only to this sort of evil that he devotes his attention as an author—rather than to wage slavery, pogroms of Jews, war, political corruption, racialism, economic injustice.

For somewhat the same reason he never develops an adequate critique of Marxism. The best we can say here is that his judgments are naïve, contradictory, and badly muddled. At one moment he accepts economic materialism in all its essentials; the next moment he is proving that it is not really economic materialism. Or else he accepts economic materialism, but protests its "distortion" into a metaphysical or psychological materialism. He is quite aware of the prophetic ingredient in Marx, but he never comes to perceive why Marxism in practice must lead to the Soviet Communist pattern. In this connection it is obvious, in the Kegley and Bretall book, that Eduard Heimann is handling Tillich's social philosophy with a deliberate gentleness. It is in the "autobiographical reflections" in this book that Tillich makes clear his intransigent loyalty to religious socialism: "It was a mistake when the editor of the *Christian Century* gave to my article in the series 'How My Mind Changed in the Last Ten Years' the title 'Beyond Religious Socialism.' If the prophetic message is true, there is nothing 'beyond religious socialism.'"<sup>35</sup>

More fundamental in Tillich, and never really acknowledged by him, is the nostalgia for the feudal, aristocratic society. He tells us how, as a lad, he still respected the nobility while he learned to rail against the bourgeoisie. And one wonders sometimes whether his is a religious socialism, or just a Tory socialism. He tells also how he came to the discovery that World War I was the fruit of "capitalist imperialism," although it was

<sup>34</sup> *The Protestant Era*, p. 223.

<sup>35</sup> *The Theology of Paul Tillich*, pp. 12-13.

plainly the fruit of a dying feudal imperialism. Indeed, he belongs in the great German company of Hegel, Marx, Spengler, Werner-Sombart. All of them idealize the feudal order: some because they really love it, some because they are prophets of a feudal fascism, and some because it is the best way to belittle capitalism. All of them are in love with the social gestalt. None of them understands freedom, democracy, capitalism, parliamentary institutions. All of them extol the beautiful sense of community, the idyllic relations between master and servant, the reverent uses of property, the feeling for social stability and fitness in a bygone era. For them and for the cultures for which they spoke, it was only proper, therefore, that the revolution should leap straight from feudalism to communism or to national socialism, from one gestalt to another, and never know anything of liberty.

Of course Tillich experienced a kind of awkwardness in writing, for the *Christian Century*, how his mind had changed. Because he never changed his mind. He simply enlarged it. He sought out a bigger and better gestalt—the Perfect Whole. In due time he would revert to the *Naturphilosophie* of Schelling that entranced him as a youth, and to the disciplined Prussian bureaucracy of which he early perceived the metaphysical meaning:

. . . the valuation of order and law as highest norms . . . a conscious subordination of the members of the organic whole. It would be justifiable, therefore, if one derived from this very ideology of the Prussian bureaucracy the tendency of many German philosophies toward an harmonious system in philosophical theory and political practice.<sup>36</sup>

Primitive collectivism was gone; medieval semi-collectivism was also a ghost; the neo-collectivisms were a horror. Meanwhile religious socialism was failing of its Kairos. One could, however, erect a socialist, a collectivist metaphysics—an ontology, more or less religious—which might prove more satisfying. And here the initial *Einsicht* would not be crassly perceptual; it would be an insight of pure reason. Here the ordering intellect of Tillich, so infinitely subtle, and skilled, and inclusive, could find an enterprise worthy of its talents. Here one would deal, not with successive gestalts in time, but with the final, the timeless gestalt of Being. Here at last everything—nature, man, society, art, education, literature, politics—would fall into its proper place—even God!

<sup>36</sup> *The Interpretation of History*, p. 10.

# Kierkegaard's Sociology

*With Notes on Its Relevance to the Church*

DAVID DEMSON

MASS SOCIETY—if that is what we live in—is the result of two concurrent streams. The one stream consists in the loss of an individual ethic. The other stream consists in the fact that the institutions that have taught the individual ethic, namely the family, the secular voluntary and involuntary associations in society, and our Church, are no longer able to teach it. This leaves the pedagogical task to introspection; and because of the now negative force of our institutions, introspection by itself is also bound to fail.

The idea of examining these problems of our mass society is certainly not original. Yet, just as certainly, we have the obligation to think about them, and to be carefully aware of such factors as this: that if you weaken the idea of an individual ethic you are at the same moment weakening the idea in the institutions that can teach it. This is the more complex and more important problem. The awareness of such factors, along with a profound sense of responsibility, a subtlety of mind and an articulate use of language, was applied to the problem (of the loss of an individual ethic) by Kierkegaard. His *sociology* has not been systematically treated, which indicates that we have not seriously sought to analyze the historical roots of this situation; for if we had, we would be aware of the historical perspective that Kierkegaard brings to it.

## I

Kierkegaard recognized that the idea of conscience was dependent on a belief in two realms. He believed that conscience was the direct application by an individual of the transcendent realm to his action.<sup>1</sup> Kierkegaard maintained that history is irrelevant and thought is a phantom. Only an individual's ethical behavior determines whether he will be eternally

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<sup>1</sup> See Peter Drucker's article, "The Unfashionable Kierkegaard" in *Sewanee Review*, Vol. 57, Autumn 1949, p. 589.

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damned or saved. Therefore the greatest influence on an individual's citizenship in society should be his life in the spirit. Kierkegaard pointed out that the possibility for such citizenship in society is lessening. The French Revolution, speculative thought, the machine, and the Press have changed thinking. This new climate suffocates the idea of individual conscience.

Before considering these forces of change individually, an understanding of Kierkegaard's thinking about this problem in general needs to be suggested. Kierkegaard believed that the idea of an Absolute is necessary for a concept of the ethical. He stated that the most respectable feature of the Middle Ages was that men applied an absolute ethical standard to their conduct.<sup>2</sup> It is evident that Kierkegaard held such a position not so much because he believed that absolute truths are evident in nature, but because he realized that every man craves to be associated with something "that holds fast."<sup>3</sup> This idea is the keystone of ethical behavior. Art, literature, a sense of decency, a sense of superstate, are things which are bound to change. Therefore, they cannot provide a sense of another realm from which conscience can be derived. They change, they are relative, Kierkegaard asserted; the individual will have a tendency to be swayed by the crowd, and "the crowd is untruth."<sup>4</sup> Life in the spirit is the only meaningful realm from which to derive conscience.

Kierkegaard said "the crowd is untruth." He stressed the idea of the individual as much as he stressed the need for the Absolute. His contempt for the crowd or mass was enormous. He said the age is sick not because it seeks pleasure, indulgence, or sensuality, but because it has a dissolute, "pantheistic contempt" for the individual man.<sup>5</sup> Religion is the medicine Kierkegaard wanted used to cure the sickness. Yet he felt the church of his day had failed. So the true religious ideas the individual must somehow now seek for himself. The "how" is a very tenuous point that Kierkegaard never made very clear. But the reason he chose religion as a cure was not only because the idea of the Absolute was needed. It was also because Kierkegaard felt that the real Christian religion emphasized individualism. He often pointed to St. Paul's assertion that "we are saved [one] by one." Kierkegaard wrote, "Religiously speaking there is no such thing as a public, but only individuals."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Kierkegaard, S., *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, trans. by David F. Swenson, Princeton, 1944, p. 486.

<sup>3</sup> Kierkegaard, S., *The Point of View*, trans. by Walter Lowrie, Oxford, 1950, p. 163.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 112.

<sup>5</sup> *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, p. 317.

<sup>6</sup> *The Point of View*, p. 153.

The point here is that the individual is in relation to God and this is the only thing of importance. This is his life in the spirit. If an individual is conscious of his life in the spirit, he will pattern his citizenship in society on it. He therefore will never accept mass thought and action, because another realm is more important. Kierkegaard said that this sense of life in the spirit was, in the deepest sense, the need of the age.<sup>7</sup> The idea in Kierkegaard's mind that real Christianity entailed individualism was made clear when he said: "The Christian combat is always waged by the individual; for this precisely is spirit, that everyone is an individual before God, that 'fellowship' is a lower category than the single individual, which everyone can be and should be."<sup>8</sup>

If Kierkegaard saw a need for an Absolute and for individualism, he must have believed that they had nearly disappeared in men's minds. And he did believe this. Men now act in the mass, for "It is a fear that if they were to become particular existing human beings, they would vanish tracelessly,"<sup>9</sup> and no one would remember them. For instance, men hide behind official titles and offices. Kierkegaard says of this, "Nothing, nothing, nothing, no error, no crime is so absolutely repugnant to God as everything which is official. . . ."<sup>10</sup> Coupled with this ill is another, which Kierkegaard describes in *The Sickness Unto Death*; this ill is the belief that a "*summa summarum*" of all men has come to displace the idea of God. So the idea of an Absolute and the idea of individualism have both declined. Kierkegaard attempts to explain the causes.

## II

The earliest origins of this new change Kierkegaard ascribed to *the French Revolution*. The unfortunate aspects of the revolution were carried on by *the Press*. The Press assigned to the crowd the virtue of being right. After this idea became prevalent, *Hegel* assigned the possibility of a sacred mission and destiny to the state. So man *en masse* saw himself, Kierkegaard asserted, not only as right but also as the executor of destiny. Men felt it was not only their duty to act in the mass but, moreover, it was their sacred destiny to do so. For Kierkegaard believed that men in the mass had come to consider themselves as equivalent to the state. Finally, *the industrial revolution* strengthened the idea of the mass. So man now acted *en masse*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 110.

<sup>8</sup> Kierkegaard, S., *Training in Christianity*, trans. by Walter Lowrie, Princeton, 1947, p. 218.

<sup>9</sup> *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, p. 317.

<sup>10</sup> Kierkegaard, S., *Journals*, trans. by Alexander Dru, Oxford, 1951, No. 1309.



not only out of a sense of duty and out of a sense of destiny,<sup>11</sup> but also because this was now the sociological need. The factors of production were gathered around large urban centers.

Each of these elements has reinforced the change, so that men more and more orient their thinking in terms of the mass. Kierkegaard strove to explain the evils of thought and action by the mass. Such thought and action is spiritlessness. "Spirit-lessness knows no authority, for it knows that over spirit there is no authority, but since unfortunately it is itself not spirit, it is in spite of its knowledge a complete idolator. It worships a dunce and a hero with the same adoration, but above all a charlatan is its real fetish."<sup>12</sup> This idolatry is easily understood, since the spiritless man does not have the courage to admit that a dunce (the demagogue) is employing the same words as he, a spiritless man, uses. Incompetent leadership is therefore only one of the results, but an important one. Kierkegaard remarked that statecraft in modern states has come to be the art of becoming a minister rather than being one; that is, time and training are taken not for administering the state, but for attaining office.<sup>13</sup>

Each of the forces of change needs to be more fully explained. The effects of the French Revolution and its aftermath Kierkegaard recorded in *The Sickness Unto Death*. If order is to be maintained (and that is God's will), "first and foremost it must be remembered that every man is an individual man."<sup>14</sup> For if men gather into a mass, the multitude will often come to be considered as God. Such masses have gathered since the French Revolution. These masses, in self-assurance, begin a process of overawing. The crowd overawes the king, and the newspapers overawe the Parliament, "so then at last [men] discover that the summa summarum of all men overawes God."<sup>15</sup>

More detail of the processes of the mass in the post-Revolution days is given by Kierkegaard in *The Present Age*.<sup>16</sup> Men had the wish, then, to reduce everything to the "same level." In order to actualize this wish, men created "a phantom . . . a monstrous abstraction . . . an all-embracing something which is nothing, a mirage . . . *the Public*."<sup>17</sup> What Kierkegaard meant is that men formed in a mass, and then thought in terms of

<sup>11</sup> Kierkegaard claimed that men only thought these words still had meaning. Actually the real meaning or inward reality had been emptied out of them.

<sup>12</sup> Kierkegaard, S., *The Concept of Dread*, trans. by Walter Lowrie, Princeton, 1946, pp. 85-86.

<sup>13</sup> *Journals*, No. 1210.

<sup>14</sup> Kierkegaard, S., *The Sickness Unto Death*, trans. by Walter Lowrie, Princeton, 1946, p. 193.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *The Present Age and two minor ethico-religious treatises*, trans. by Alexander Dru and Walter Lowrie, Oxford, 1949, see esp. pp. 37 ff.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

themselves as a mass (thus the name, the Public), so that they could legitimize their power, at least in their own minds. He maintained that the idea was not present in the Revolution itself. That time was a time of tumult, passion, and enthusiasm which desired only destruction. "It is only in an age which is without passion, yet reflective, that such a phantom can develop itself with the help of the Press which itself becomes an abstraction."<sup>18</sup> The idea that the concept of a Public arises only after the period of tumult is an interesting observation. But even more interesting is Kierkegaard's idea that once this phantom is created, the Press wields the real power.

1. The real leveler, which even assures the deposition of God, is the Press. The Public itself cannot be the leveler because in actuality it is a "monstrous nothing," Kierkegaard believed. Kierkegaard during his life was cruelly characterized and castigated by the Danish Press. This was probably not the sole reason for his detestation of the Press, but his rantings do seem to go too far. The Press, he says, is "the most disgusting of all tyrannies, the tyranny of the louse; and the most disgusting kind of toady licking the tyrant's [the mass's] boots, the slave of the lice. . . ." <sup>19</sup> The mass needed leadership. The legitimacy of its power was achieved by the concept of the Public. But the Public is not in itself a leader, so thought logically comes to the mass from—elsewhere—the Press, and that is why the Press wields the real power.

The situation that this post-Revolution era presented, Kierkegaard said, was that of diabolic possession. There was stimulation and excitement for people when they acted *en masse*. Excitement is generated by associating oneself with the popular cause. "One hardly knows what one is doing or saying, or who or what is speaking through one. . . . O, depths of confusion and depravity, when it is at the same time valued as the seriousness of life, warm-heartedness, love, yes even—Christianity."<sup>20</sup> This kind of feeling ran rampant after the Revolution, if we may believe Kierkegaard. He remarked ironically that soon one portrait (of mass man) will suffice for all.<sup>21</sup> The Press will maintain this feeling of mass excitement in men.

But this excitement is not warm passion. Warm passion would be the acceptance of individuality, God, and the fellowship of individuals. Because the time after the French Revolution was in this sense a passionless age, Kierkegaard points out, repugnant dialectical feats were possible. These

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Journals*, No. 1368.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 1063.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 1312.

dialectical feats emptied out the inward reality of all relationships and left only an idea about tension. But this tension existed only because everything was left standing while its meaning was left so ambiguous that all private interpretation believed that it did not in fact exist.<sup>22</sup> Thus, life in the spirit was no longer a meaningful basis of citizenship in society.

2. These levelers of the Press were dangerous, but they were nowhere nearly as dangerous as the second group, Kierkegaard insisted. The second group consisted of the speculative philosophers who stood in relation to the deeper things in man. They were more dangerous, for these thinkers were confused about the meaning of religion. The "fundamental evil of modern Speculation [was] the fact that men confused the spheres, confounded profundity of mind with authority, the intellectual with the ethical."<sup>23</sup> Kierkegaard regarded this as a greater danger because, while the first levelers made ethical action difficult, the second were destroying in men's minds any idea of ethics. In part, Kierkegaard may have misunderstood the ethics of the speculative philosophers. Hegel, in effect, said that the good citizen was the same as the good man; but Hegel assumed that the state was the perfect state. Thus the ethics of the individual were for Hegel the ethics of citizenship.

We can understand why Kierkegaard became nearly psychotic in his attitude toward Hegel. (He often attacked Hegel most vehemently.) We have seen what the post-Revolution days had made of citizenship. It was, according to Kierkegaard, participation in the crowd. Now, seemingly, Hegel said that this participation is proper ethical action. Actually Hegel did not say this; he was talking about the perfect state. But speculative philosophy was misinterpreted, and often it does give a special destiny to the state. So men did think that ethical action was in terms of mass participation.

Hegel did make the state into an abstraction, as Kierkegaard reminds us, and in this situation a mass can more easily assume that it really *is* this abstraction. This abstraction of Hegel's is, said Kierkegaard, "a monster of fairyland with many heads, or more correctly and truly with a thousand legs . . . a monstrous absurdity which nevertheless is physically in possession of power."<sup>24</sup> If the state is deified, as Hegel tends to deify it, the idea of the individual and individual ethical behavior assumes lesser importance. Kierkegaard wrote: "Hegel makes men into heathens, *into a race of animals*

<sup>22</sup> *The Present Age*, see pp. 15 ff.

<sup>23</sup> Kierkegaard, S., *On Authority and Revelation*, trans. by Walter Lowrie, Princeton, 1955, p. xviii.

<sup>24</sup> *On Authority and Revelation*, p. 193.

*gifted with reason.* For in the animal world 'the individual' is always less important than the race."<sup>25</sup>

I would not want to go to the extreme as Kierkegaard does in condemning the ethics of speculative philosophy, but it is true that these ethics can be stretched into an apology for a mass ethic. And the ethics of the speculative philosophers certainly do not stress the individual nature of ethics. Or if they do, they try to reconcile life in the spirit and citizenship in society instead of accepting them as in tension.

3. There is a third great force which orients man in a sense of the mass rather than toward a sense of ethical individuality and responsibility. The industrial age tends to collect men together in factories and in urban centers. With this industrialism has come a belief that man can solve his problems by producing greater amounts of material goods, Kierkegaard stated. The effect of collectivization was reflected in Kierkegaard's comment that one portrait will soon do for all. Also

by getting engaged in all sorts of worldly affairs, by becoming wise about how things go in this world, such a man [confronted by the machine age] forgets himself, forgets what his name is (in the divine understanding of it), does not dare to believe in himself, finds it too venturesome a thing to be himself, far easier and safer to be like the others.<sup>26</sup>

Therefore he falls into trivia in order to triumph spiritlessly, so that he will not be crushed by despair. Kierkegaard illustrates how much the machine can contribute to this spiritlessness. Men can all do the same kinds of tasks. They will have a tendency toward an agreement if they work at similar tasks and work in similar places. Finally this regimentation forces their thought toward trivia. All of this helps them to retain the idea of themselves as part of a group instead of as individuals.

In his introduction to the English version of *The Present Age*, Charles Williams marvels at Kierkegaard's prowess as prophet. Williams asserts that the machine age was not yet upon the world and yet Kierkegaard knew it for all its evil effects. He realized what a potential danger it was for the already ebbing idea of citizenship in society founded on life in the spirit. Kierkegaard's prophecy has been actualized in history.

Kierkegaard realized that the belief in technology did not lack sophistication. This belief fortified itself by claiming to follow the dictates of reason. Man has infinite possibilities for material success—that would be the new belief. Men will believe that they can analyze and subject nature to

<sup>25</sup> *Journals*, No. 1050.

<sup>26</sup> *The Sickness Unto Death*, p. 51.

their reason. Thus, reason will save them from all ills—this is their salvation—by showing them how, materially, they can solve any problem.<sup>27</sup> Thus such men will worry only about one thing: how to get men to vote on their side, so that they can assemble sufficient physical force to overcome all their problems.<sup>28</sup>

To sum up, Kierkegaard said that the French Revolution exalted man, and the idea of God as Absolute was gone. But man craves an absolute outside himself,<sup>29</sup> and Hegel's deification of the state filled this vacuum. Thus it would be, Kierkegaard prophesied, a depersonalized, mediocre (equal now means average), secular man that would be confronted by the machine age. Then the machine would not only regulate his time, but the idea of class (proletariat) would irrevocably sink him into mass thinking.

With one reinforcement coming upon another the idea of the mass, then, has been strengthened in men's minds. "With all this curriculum of ministers the human race has become more and more confused, like a drunken man, who, the more he rushes about, the more drunken he becomes, even if he gets no more to drink."<sup>30</sup> The need is for the political to turn to the religious and, unfortunately, to the blood of martyrs. The need in Kierkegaard's mind was the re-establishment of the transcendent realm, or life in the spirit. Often he said that the political hope now lay with priests and not with politicians. Particularly now, when there is little thinking about life in the spirit, Kierkegaard asserts, every mob wants to abolish God and to cow men into mouseholes—by promising them a package deal on salvation.<sup>31</sup>

### III

To say that the political hope now lies with priests instead of politicians is only to re-emphasize the idea that men live in a tension between two realms. This is an idea that ultimately depends upon the churches for propagation. In ethical and political action the need for ethical decisions arises because of the conflict between the desire to serve a transcendent realm and the desire to act in the visible realm. If there are failures in our civilization, it is partly (and perhaps largely) because our institutions are not made aware of this tension by religion.

If religion (in our Church) will not stress that life is conflict, but says that the realms can be one, then the idea is dead. The groups which make

<sup>27</sup> *On Authority and Revelation*, pp. xxi-xxii.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 195.

<sup>29</sup> *The Point of View*, p. 163.

<sup>30</sup> *On Authority and Revelation*, p. xxiii.

<sup>31</sup> *Training in Christianity*, p. 91.



up society will deny the other realm in seeking all power for themselves. This is why "society" tries to force art and craft into conformity. The family is subject largely to the propaganda of this "society." The suggestion that there are two realms will not usually, then, reach the individual. If the idea of this tension is not maintained by religion, then it will be maintained nowhere else, and the ultimate source of restraint on the political institutions of society will atrophy. Equally as bad, there can be no understanding of political or ethical problems. Finally, then, the Church itself will decay.

Kierkegaard's interpretative historical analysis, then, has finally laid the responsibility of the corrective to mass society upon the Church. This may seem a rather surprising conclusion, in view of the fact that in some senses Kierkegaard stood outside the Church. Yet when we have examined Kierkegaard's analysis of mass society, we understand—even if Kierkegaard did not—that the Church is essentially the only force left that can reinstate the idea of the individual ethic. That this function of emphasizing the individual ethic (or tension) has itself been weakened in the Church by mass society is almost unquestionable. The Church must be aware, then, both of this weakening and of its responsibility to emphasize the corrective—which is the idea of the individual ethic.

# Freud and Theology

HARRY M. TIEBOUT, JR.

IT SEEMS ABSURD to say that Sigmund Freud, the avowed atheist, the man who diagnosed religion as "the universal obsessional neurosis of humanity," has made a positive contribution to Christian theology and that, moreover, this contribution is contained in his very critique of religion. Yet we shall try to show in the following pages that Freud's bitter and sustained criticism of what he took to be the Judeo-Christian religion is, in fact, a criticism of post-Christian humanism, and that in the course of this criticism Freud develops certain ideas that have great apologetic value for theologians.

## I

Freud's criticism of religion has two distinct strains to it, amounting indeed to two separate and incompatible critiques. The first is the "official" Freudian criticism of religion, and is the one usually associated with Freud's name. This first critique is made in the name of "science" and seeks (1) to show that the methods and doctrines of religion are incompatible with the "scientific outlook," and (2) to show by an application of psychoanalysis the "real" subjective meaning of religious doctrine.

According to Freud, "There is no other source of knowledge of the universe, but the intellectual manipulation of carefully verified observation"; no knowledge whatsoever "can be obtained from revelation, intuition or inspiration."<sup>1</sup> In fact

It is inadmissible to declare that science is one field of human intellectual activity and that religion and philosophy are others, at least as valuable, and that science has no business to interfere with the other two, that they all have an equal claim to truth, and that everyone is free to choose whence he shall draw his conclusions. . . .

The bare fact is that truth cannot be tolerant and cannot admit compromise or limitations, that scientific research looks upon the whole field of human activity as its own, and must adopt an uncompromisingly critical attitude toward any other power that seeks to usurp any part of its province.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *New Introductory Lectures in Psychoanalysis*, London: Hogarth Press, 1949, p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> *The Future of an Illusion*, New York: Liveright, 1949, p. 76.

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Religious knowledge is thus ruled out as a contradiction in terms. Most religious dogmas can neither be confirmed nor refuted by science, since they deal with an alleged realm beyond the natural. But where religion does say something about the observable world—as in its conception of “miracles” and “creation”—it contradicts the findings of modern science and discloses itself as an archaic, animistic way of thinking. Religious dogmas are anachronistic survivals of an earlier evolutionary stage. “One might prophesy that the abandoning of religion must take place with the fateful inexorability of a process of growth, and that we are just now in the middle of this phase of development.”<sup>3</sup>

Thus far, there is nothing original in Freud’s criticism—as he himself admits. It is the standard positivist, naturalist critique and is meaningful only with respect to those fundamentalist theologies that treat “revelation” as additional secular knowledge that must be accepted on authority. Freud’s own distinctive contribution is his psychoanalytic exposé of the alleged hidden meaning of religious doctrines.

Religion, says Freud, may be regarded as a collective neurosis, or, conversely, a neurosis may be regarded as a private religion. The symptoms of a neurosis (or religion)—phobias (taboos), obsessions (rituals), and the peculiar ideational structure—do not represent, in the first instance, a reaction, intelligent or otherwise, to anything in the contemporary world. A neurotic fantasy (or religious doctrine) does not give an accurate report or interpretation of events happening in the real world. It is only a symptom or expression of certain subjective, psychological processes in the mind of the dreamer (or believer), processes which, in turn, are caused by certain events that took place in the past. Thus a dream-structure or a religious system gives us “real information” only about the past experiences of the person who has the fantasy.

According to Freud a neurotic or religious person is fixated upon certain childhood events, notably the Oedipus complex. While the normal individual has overcome his childhood sexual desire for his mother and his ambivalent love, hatred, and fear of his father, the neurotic has not. The whole complex of fears, hopes, loves, and hatreds lies buried in the depths of the unconscious, from whence these emotions manifest themselves in the ritual and fantasy activities of religion and neurosis. Although the Oedipus complex is unconscious, its force is irresistible. The neurotic or religious person finds himself compelled to think and act in a way contrary to all the

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.

demands of reason and experience. He cannot help himself. He is forced to cry out: *Credo quia absurdum*.

All religious myths and symbols are reductively analyzed by Freud into, first, disguised expressions of infantile drives and emotions and, second, disguised reports of events in the childhood environment. God, of course, is the father "clothed in the grandeur in which he once appeared to the small child."<sup>4</sup> And, Freud adds:

Psychoanalytic investigation of the individual teaches with special emphasis that god is in every case modelled after the father and that our personal relation to god is dependent upon our relation to our physical father, fluctuating and changing with him, and that god at bottom is nothing but an exalted father.<sup>5</sup>

The various attributes of the deity are projections of parental attitudes. Thus the wrath of God is the wrath of the father and is exhibited primarily as a threat to castrate the child. Fear of the Lord is thus in truth castration-anxiety. And the sense of guilt, so prominent in religion, represents the child's ambivalent attitude toward the father. The child hates, indeed, wishes to kill, the father. Yet he also loves him and feels remorse and guilt for his own evil intentions.<sup>6</sup>

The vast scope of this reductive psychological analysis of religious ideas is summarily illustrated by the following statements from one of Freud's most famous and most orthodox followers, Ernest Jones: "The central conclusion based on psychoanalytic research is that *the religious life represents a dramatization on a cosmic plane of the emotions, fears, and longing which arose in the child's relation to his parents.*"<sup>7</sup> All religious ideas must be regarded as "ideas of the self and the immediate blood relatives, or of the phenomena of birth, love, and death. In other words, they represent the most primitive ideas and interests imaginable."<sup>8</sup>

Moreover: "The theological statement that God is our Father appears to be fully justified in a psychological sense. Both militant atheism and devout belief in God can be equally traced to the child's earliest reactions to

<sup>4</sup> *New Introductory Lectures in Psychoanalysis*, p. 208.

<sup>5</sup> A. D. Brill, ed. *The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud*, New York, Random House, 1938, pp. 919-920. In many cases, the individual's idea of god is derived not from his own childhood experiences but from certain traumatic events in the childhood of the human race which have left "phylogenetic memory traces" in the psyche of the individual. For Freud's theory of the "primal father," see *Basic Writings*, pp. 903-904, 195-199; *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, pp. 121-126; *Civilization and Its Discontents*, pp. 118-122; *Moses and Monotheism*, pp. 127-130.

<sup>6</sup> Freud analyzes Dostoevsky's "moral masochism" in terms of castration-anxiety and the need for punishment. He concludes: "For every punishment is ultimately castration and, as such, a fulfillment of the old passive attitude toward the father. Even fate is, in the last resort, only a later father-projection." (*Collected Papers*, Vol. V, p. 231.)

<sup>7</sup> "Psychoanalysis and the Psychology of Religion," in Sandor Lorand, ed., *Psychoanalysis Today*, New York: Covici Friede, 1933, p. 125.

<sup>8</sup> *Papers on Psychoanalysis*, Fourth Ed., London: Balliere, Indall, and Cox, 1938, p. 145.

its earthly father (or to the idea of a father when the actual one is lacking)."<sup>9</sup> Finally: "Deep analysis constantly shows that even the philosophical pessimism about life is bound up with internal inhibitions of enjoyment and self-content which, from their origin and fate after analysis, can only be regarded as artifacts in the evolution of the individual."<sup>10</sup>

And so, the upshot of Freud's first analysis is not merely that questions about the ultimate meaning of life are unanswerable. They are unaskable. The great religious thinkers are not really concerned about the "meaning of life." The real, but unconscious, subject matter of religious and philosophical inquiry is the infantile concerns of the Oedipus complex. The mature individual has outgrown his Oedipus complex and, hence, no longer asks questions about the "meaning of life."

This first critique places Freud in the broad stream of thought variously designated as scientism, humanistic naturalism, or positivism. It is this general position that has been for at least two centuries the main intellectual opponent of Christianity. On the one hand, its methodological positivism rules out not only revelation but even any philosophical analysis of human subjectivity. It recognizes as meaningful only objective thing-concepts and recognizes as true only propositions that can be "publicly" verified. On the other hand, its existential positivism or motivational nominalism rules out any religious concern. All so-called spiritual problems are really "merely psychological," that is, they have specific causes and specific referents.

This position itself depends upon a largely unacknowledged acceptance of evolution as a rationalized form of the Judeo-Christian symbol of Divine Providence.<sup>11</sup> Evil, both individual and social, is due to the influence of the past and is destined in large part to be wiped out by the progressive forces immanent in nature, particularly as embodied in man's scientific intelligence.<sup>12</sup> To a person caught up in this progressivistic optimism, the Christian notions of sin and salvation are simply meaningless.

## II

Freud's second criticism of religion rests upon three presuppositions that contradict his first critique: (1) the source of evil is not the past but

<sup>9</sup> *Psychoanalysis Today*, p. 330.

<sup>10</sup> "The Concept of a Normal Mind," *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, Vol. 23, 1942, pp. 2-3.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. J. H. Randall, *Making of the Modern Mind*, New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1940, pp. 606-611; Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I, University of Chicago Press, 1951, pp. 264-66.

<sup>12</sup> Thus one enthusiastic Freudian writes: "Through psychoanalysis, at last, mental health, efficiency, education of mind and body, human welfare generally—racial as well as personal—become subject to purposive direction and control, exactly as the forces of nature are today in the engineer's hands." (J. S. Van Teslaar, "The significance of Psychoanalysis," *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, Vol. 3, 1921, p. 347.)



is rather an eternal principle of disruption or negation (nonbeing) operating in external nature and in man; (2) man may ask genuinely philosophical and religious questions; (3) the use of myth and symbol is legitimate. Thus, in the second critique, Freud attacks what he takes to be the Judeo-Christian tradition not from the point of view of progressivistic optimism but from a quite explicit Platonic dualism; not from the point of view of science but on a quite frankly philosophical level; and finally not with the rigorous methodology of the positivist but with intuition, myth, and Greek theological symbols.

Freud seeks to show that man's profoundest experience, his deepest insight into the nature of things, reveals the utter falsity of the Judeo-Christian conception of Providence. According to Freud, the Judeo-Christian world view holds that "life in this world serves a higher purpose."

Everything that takes place in this world expresses the intentions of an Intelligence, superior to us, which in the end, though its devious paths may be difficult to follow, orders everything for the good, that is, to our advantage. Over each of us watches a benevolent, and only apparent severe, Providence, which will not suffer us to become the plaything of the stark and pitiless forces of nature.<sup>13</sup>

But, says Freud:

It seems not to be true that there is a power in the universe which watches over the well-being of every individual and brings all his concerns to a happy ending. On the contrary, the destinies of men are incompatible with a universal principle of benevolence or with—what is to some degree contradictory—a universal principle of justice. Earthquakes, floods, and fires do not differentiate between the good and devout man and the sinner and unbeliever. . . . It happens often enough that the violent, the crafty and the unprincipled seize the desirable goods of the earth for themselves, while the pious go empty away. Dark, unfeeling, and unloving powers determine human destiny; the system of rewards and punishments, which, according to religion, governs the world, seems to have no existence.<sup>14</sup>

The final arbiter of human destiny, according to Freud, is necessity, *Ananké*. Freud does not regard his picture of fate as a projection of his own relation to his father or as symbol of his own unresolved Oedipus complex. On the contrary, he regards it as the truest picture man can form of the outer world as it appears to him as his ultimate concern. Man rises to this conception of an impersonal destiny by a progressive detachment from his infantile identification of his father with destiny, through a series of "pictures" (*imagos*) that are increasingly more objective.

The last figure in the series beginning with the parents is that of the dark supremacy of Fate, which only the fewest among us are able to conceive of imperson-

<sup>13</sup> *The Future of an Illusion*, p. 32.

<sup>14</sup> *New Introductory Lectures in Psychoanalysis*, pp. 213-14.

ally. Little can be said against the Dutch writer Multatuli, when he substitutes the divine pair *Logos kai Ananké* for the Moira of the Greeks; but all those who transfer the guidance of the world to Providence, to God, or to God and Nature, rouse a suspicion that they still look upon those farthest and remotest powers as a parent couple—mythologically—and imagine themselves linked to them by libidinal bonds.<sup>15</sup>

There is no bond of love between nature and man. Nature is fundamentally hostile:

There are the elements, which seem to mock at all human control: the earth, which quakes, is rent asunder, and buries man and all his works; the water, which in tumult floods and submerges all things; the storm, which drives all before it; there are the diseases, which we have only lately recognized as the attacks of other living creatures; and finally there is the painful riddle of death, for which no remedy at all has yet been found, nor probably ever will be. With these forces nature rises up before us, sublime, pitiless, inexorable. . . . For the individual, as for mankind in general, life is hard to endure.<sup>16</sup>

In fact, concludes Freud, "One might say that the intention that man should be 'happy' is not included in the scheme of 'Creation.'" <sup>17</sup>

Religion, like neurosis, is a flight from painful reality into an illusory world system.<sup>18</sup> Two factors produce this flight from reality. One is the already mentioned terrifying nature of the outer world. The other is man's own narcissism, his inveterate tendency to demand special favors from the gods and his refusal to accept his finitude.<sup>19</sup> To protect his narcissism and to allay his anxiety in the face of the crushing supremacy of nature, man constructs the fantasy world of religion and neurosis.

By substituting the concept of an all-powerful will for the scientific concept of "impersonal forces and fates," religion offers a man a way out of his misery. By performing acts of obeisance, we can make peace with the gods. "We can try to exorcise them, to appease them, to bribe them, and so rob them of part of their power by thus influencing them."<sup>20</sup> In fact in prayer we have, according to religion, "a direct influence on the divine will, and in that way insure (for ourselves) a share in the divine omnipotence."<sup>21</sup>

Of course, religion cannot succeed in its attempt to get control over

<sup>15</sup> *Collected Papers*, Vol. II, p. 265.

<sup>16</sup> *The Future of an Illusion*, pp. 26-27.

<sup>17</sup> *Civilisation and Its Discontents*, London: Hogarth Press, 1930, p. 27.

<sup>18</sup> Freud's second critique of religion is correlated with a second theory of neurosis in which neurosis is regarded as primarily a flight from reality, rather than as a reactivation of infantile fixations. Cf. *Collected Papers*, Vol. II, p. 279.

<sup>19</sup> The two technical terms for this "self-elevation" are "narcissism" and the "pleasure-principle." The mature individual is able to renounce narcissism and the pleasure-principle, i.e., to accept finitude, suffering, death, and the inexorable, impersonal reign of causality. He thus lives according to the "reality-principle."

<sup>20</sup> *The Future of an Illusion*, p. 29.

<sup>21</sup> *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, p. 210.

the sensory world by means of the wish-world. "Religion brings with it obsessional limitations" and induces a state of "blissful hallucinatory confusion."<sup>22</sup> Its comforts and consolations are comparable to the effects produced by narcotics or by a sheltered nursery environment. "By the forceful imposition of mental infantilism and inducing a mass delusion . . . religion succeeds in saving many people from individual neuroses. But little more."<sup>23</sup> The man who gives up religion "will be in the same position as the child who has left the home where he was so warm and comfortable. But, after all, is it not the destiny of childishness to be overcome? Man cannot remain a child forever; he must venture at last into the hostile world. This may be called 'education to reality.'"<sup>24</sup>

There are, however, positive, healing forces in nature. Freud symbolizes these forces as "Logos" and "Eros." Logos represents the rationality of nature as it culminates in man's scientific intelligence. In a way reminiscent of Plato, Freud says that Logos will bring about "so far as external reality, *Ananké*, allows it—the brotherhood of man and the reduction of human suffering."<sup>25</sup> Eros is the power that holds together all living things, that is responsible for growth and for the union of living things into larger aggregations. This power is also called by Freud the life-instincts or libido. It is opposed by the death-instincts or destruction, which seeks to break up aggregations and to return the living to the inorganic.<sup>26</sup> The struggle between these two powers is interminable. Freud's intuitive vision of the battle between these two ruling powers of the animate world appears in the concluding paragraph of *Civilization and Its Discontents*:

The fateful question of the human species seems to me to be whether and to what extent the cultural process developed in it will succeed in mastering the derangements of communal life caused by the human instinct of aggression and self-destruction. . . . Men have brought their powers of subduing the forces of nature to such a pitch that by using them they could now very easily exterminate one another to the last man. They know this—hence arises a great part of their current unrest, their dejection, their mood of apprehension. And now it may be expected that the other of the two "heavenly forces," eternal Eros, will put forth his strength so as to maintain himself alongside of his equally immortal adversary.<sup>27</sup>

Thus, in place of the conception of a providential God, Freud has the conception of an impersonal necessity that is within limits permissive of

<sup>22</sup> *The Future of an Illusion*, p. 76.

<sup>23</sup> *Civilization and Its Discontents*, p. 42.

<sup>24</sup> *The Future of an Illusion*, pp. 85-86.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 93 ff.

<sup>26</sup> For the struggle between Eros and Destruction, see *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, London: Hogarth Press, 1948, pp. 63-97; *Civilization and Its Discontents*, pp. 97, 101-103.

<sup>27</sup> *Civilization and Its Discontents*, pp. 143-44.

the constructive efforts of Logos and of the uniting efforts of Eros, and yet which contains a large residual element of irrationality and nonbeing or death.

### III

This second critique is, of course, not actually a critique of the Judeo-Christian doctrine of Providence in its classical and neo-orthodox forms, but is, in fact, a criticism of the secularized liberal conception of Providence that formed the presupposition of Freud's own psychoanalytic enterprise. Paul Tillich has pointed out how in the Enlightenment the paradoxical Christian conception of Providence—based on a faith "in spite of" the "darkness of fate and the meaninglessness of existence"—was replaced by a rationalistic conception based upon the belief that all things are constructed by God to serve the purpose of human happiness and that an automatic law of harmony regulates all conflicting trends, purposes, and activities of nature and history. Tillich has also pointed out how Hegel and Marx introduced a note of negativity and estrangement. "Fate begins to appear again as the dark background of a rationalized providence and as its perennial threat."<sup>28</sup> The catastrophes of the twentieth century, according to Tillich, shattered what remained of the concept of rational Providence. Thus, today "Fate overshadows the Christian world, as it overshadowed the ancient world two thousand years ago—the question of historical existence again has become a struggle with the darkness of fate; it is the same struggle in which originally the Christian victory was won."<sup>29</sup>

When one penetrates the jejune "official" remarks about science and religion in Freud's writings, one finds a profound criticism not of Christianity but of post-Christian optimism, a criticism made not on the basis of a scientific study of man but on the basis of Freud's own encounter with non-being. Freud has done theologians a great service in demolishing, in his own way, the modern idols of infinite progress and infinite control. And it is fair to say that the final outcome of Freud's own struggle for spiritual equilibrium is the very attitude of baffled and somewhat fearful resignation that characterized late antiquity and "against which Christianity originally won its victory."

In like manner, Freud's conception of religion as an attempt to get control of the gods is not correctly directed against Christianity. Freud was unable to distinguish between magic and religion. He saw that the gods cannot be brought to heel. His criticism was completely valid (and in the

<sup>28</sup> *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I, University of Chicago Press, 1951, pp. 265-66.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 266.

best Prophetic-Protestant tradition) against all those quasi-magical forms of religion that seek to control the will of God. But his criticism is also valid against his own scientism. Necessity, the lord of the universe, acts beyond the control of magic, religion, and science. When this point is reached, the only alternatives are resignation or grace. To the extent that Freud reaches this point, he chooses the former.

Freud never completely abandoned his dream of technological control of the human personality. And most of the time, when he speaks of the aim of psychoanalysis as the establishment of the dictatorship of the intellect, or the enthronement of reason, he has in mind what Tillich calls "technical reason" or "controlling knowledge." But at various points in his later writings Freud moves toward a philosophy of resignation. Logos becomes ontological reason, uniting knowledge in the Stoic sense. The goals of psychoanalysis is to free the *hegemonikon* from its bondage to anxiety and superstition and false hope. Man must control the blind forces of the outer world and his own irrational impulses so far as possible by the cultivation of scientific intelligence. "And as for the great necessities of fate, against which there is no remedy, these he will simply learn to endure with resignation." If he does this, "He will probably attain to a state of things in which life will be tolerable for all."<sup>30</sup>

One final point. No one should be taken in by the claim of Freud's followers that his statements about Logos and Fate and Eros and so forth are mere window dressing, *obiter dicta*, mere metaphors, and that Freud's real teachings are to be found in his scientific analyses. Freud's entire psychoanalytic enterprise rests upon an existential analysis that is neither more nor less scientific than Sartre's, Heidegger's, or Tillich's. One of the most significant features of psychoanalysis is the fact that it was a heroic, sustained effort to comprehend the human personality through the objective, thing-categories appropriate to the natural sciences. As such it failed. The basic concepts of psychoanalysis transcend the thing-categories.<sup>31</sup> Psychoanalysis should be placed in the same category as the contemporary continental existential-analysis, not in the category of scientific psychology. Indeed, the ambiguity and success of psychoanalysis rests primarily upon the fact that Freud's analysis of man's existential situation is decked out in the trappings of apparently scientific concepts. The pseudoscientific concepts

<sup>30</sup> *The Future of an Illusion*, p. 86.

<sup>31</sup> It would require another article to document this statement. We can only refer to the criticisms of Otto Rank in *Will Therapy and Truth and Reality*, New York: Knopf, 1945, and *Beyond Psychology*, Hamden: Haddon Craftsmen, 1941, and those of Ira Progoff, *The Death and Rebirth of Psychology*, New York: Julian Press, 1956.



enable Freud's followers to convince themselves (and some of their opponents) that they are practicing science, while the symbolic nature of Freud's concepts and his continual violation of his own positivistic methodological canons make it possible for psychoanalysis to deal in a significant way with man's existential situation.

Theologians should recognize Freud as a powerful ally in his criticism of post-Christian optimism and in his unwilling demonstration of the inadequacy of the objective, causal approach to the human personality. And they should recognize him as a (not so powerful) rival in his promulgation of the Stoic form of the courage to be.

# How Does the Secular Press Interpret Religious Movies?

MALCOLM BOYD

A CURIOUS FOOTNOTE in the study of American religious attitudes is the way the secular press interprets the "religious" contributions of another mass medium of communication, the motion picture industry. Whether "religious revival" or "religious depression" is being experienced in American cultural life, the press reflects popular attitudes and interprets them.

Men and women of the Fourth Estate differ sharply in their interpretations of religious films. Their criticism runs a gamut from highly literate, well-developed analysis to mere copying of a popular contemporary point of view.

## I

A non-Hollywood production is generally acknowledged to be the finest religious motion picture ever made. Pierre Fresnay portrayed St. Vincent de Paul in the French film *Monsieur Vincent*. *Cue* magazine noted the "absence of pious platitudes and unctuous sentimentality which so often mar pictures of this type." *Newsweek* wrote: "It unquestionably rates a place among the all-time greats." The story told how the humbly born priest gave up a life of luxury in a noble household to devote himself to an arduous struggle against disease, hunger, cruelty, and prejudice. "Anyone who expects it to be a dull preachment is very much mistaken!" said *The Hollywood Reporter*.

*Monsieur Vincent* provided an opportunity for the British publication *New Statesman and Nation* to get some pent-up feelings regarding American "religious" movies off of its editorial chest:

Only a mile or so of West End streets separate the Tivoli from the Curzon, but the films showing at these two cinemas are worlds apart. At the first will be found *The Miracle of the Bells*, as excruciating a sample of fake religiosity as ever Holly-

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wood devised; its lip-smacking, tongue-in-the-cheek Catholicism should provide the anthropologist of American manners . . . with some horrid tidbits. *Monsieur Vincent*, the new film at the Curzon, offers us by contrast a sober, realistic and deeply moving life of St. Vincent de Paul; and, here, for Catholic and non-Catholic alike, is a real miracle of film-making.

He is a saint, but he is accessible. And hardly less alive and convincing is the terrifying background of poverty, equalled only on the screen—as one critic has discerningly pointed out—by parts of the Gorky trilogy: one scene in hospital where the mutilated show their stumps and the dying fight for a wretched bed to die in, would be almost unbearable in any other context.

The clergy portrayal earning the worst critical notices in the relatively short history of religious movies was that of Frank Sinatra as a young Polish Roman Catholic priest in *The Miracle of the Bells*. According to the *New York Times*, Sinatra “appears frightened, speechless (and almost songless) by the task of playing a priest.” This critic went on to say: “The picture is so weighted with mawkish melancholia that it drips all over the screen. And it utterly fails to make evident the personal significance of the ‘miracle’ which occurs.” Another critic, finding the film “nauseating,” said of Mr. Sinatra’s portrayal: “In one of Hollywood’s most banal efforts he puts on a dog collar.” *Daily Variety* said: “Picture is fundamentally hokum, but hokum has seldom been more beautifully filmed. And there are passages in which the human interest appeal is so legitimate and convincing as to set even the hard-boiled cynics of the audience reaching for their handkerchiefs.” In apparent disagreement, *Cue* described the film as:

A painfully depressing, forbidding and tedious tale. Utterly and completely unrelieved in its lachrymal melancholia, *The Miracle of the Bells* is not entertainment—either cheerful or otherwise. Its direction is unimaginative, its performances undistinguished, and the whole picture is drenched in a kind of synthetic and sanctimonious piety that marks its pretensions to spiritual uplift as merely shallow and ridiculous.

In 1948 John Ford’s production of *The Fugitive*—adapted from Graham Greene’s novel *The Power and the Glory* (published in England as *The Labyrinthine Ways*)—was released. The story tells of an indifferent priest who lost his life but found his soul through persecution in a country where antireligious feeling was fostered by the government. In the opinion of *Cue* the film told a story “in the form of a modern parable.” This critic continued: “It is now no longer the story of a priest in sin fleeing the lash of conscience, but has become a readily recognizable allegorical tale of a manhunt and a martyrdom, as the priest, defying the godless horde that has swept over his country, returns from flight to administer a last sacrament and face the inevitable firing squad.” Critic Virginia Wright of the Los Angeles *Daily News* experienced “mixed emotions” in trying to evaluate

the film. "There has been some attempt in the script to reflect the story of Christ, with an American outlaw as the Good Thief and an oily native informer as the priest's Judas," she wrote.

The New York *Times* film critic, Bosley Crowther, wrote that *The Fugitive* was "the most eloquent and the most extraordinarily disturbing film of a strongly religious nature that we have seen in our critical career." Alongside it, he found such previous religious movies as *The Keys of the Kingdom* and *The Song of Bernadette* "as the works of minor illustrators to a painting by El Greco." Mr. Crowther noted that John Ford, the director,

has put all his talent and fire into the compounding in this picture of violent clashes of the senses and moods. He has used striking contrasts in landscape, the contrasts of full sunlight and deep shade, the contrasts of harsh, assertive noises and soft, soothing, satisfying sounds, to put the brutality of the physical against the serenity of the soul. And he has jumbled extreme, explosive action with magnificent passages of repose to impart the dramatic eccentricity, the tempestuousness of his characters' lives.

With *The Fugitive* in the category of daring, experimental, off-beat religious screen efforts is Samuel Goldwyn's 1950 release *Edge of Doom*. The film was unorthodox and experimental in handling of theme. "Its theme is bitter and unrelieved. Its plot is shocking: memory recalls no precedent in the history of American production," wrote *Motion Picture Herald*. Based on a prize-winning novel by Leo Brady, the film featured Farley Grainger in the role of a twisted, bitter young man who, in a moment of fury, murders a Roman Catholic priest by hitting him over the head with a crucifix.

Following initial release of the picture, it was withdrawn from distribution in order to permit shooting of a new ending more on the level of "up-beat" and "inspiration." *Time* was critical: "The book was largely an introspective study of the killer's complex motives and his painful redemption. On the screen, the story becomes a second-rate melodrama with a wispy religious motif." Dana Andrews, who played the role of Father Roth in the film, offered some refreshing observations about an actor's approach to a religious movie when interviewed by Philip K. Scheuer of the Los Angeles *Times*:

Well, actually, there's not too much difference between a Catholic priest and a Baptist minister. My father was a Baptist minister, a very good man. I think that gives me a feeling for the church. Spirit is spirit, and it's something we all need a lot of help on. Everyone wants peace of mind. The only thing that worries me is how people will accept spiritual matters on the screen. They have to be awfully cleverly handled to be interesting.

Reading Mr. Andrews' remarks, one has the impression that a Hollywood press agent was not around when the actor talked candidly, perhaps over a cup of coffee, with Reporter Scheuer. Certainly since 1950 much water has gone over the Hollywood dam in regard to presenting "spiritual matters on the screen."

## II

One of the most successful screen portrayals of a Roman Catholic priest was Spencer Tracy's role as Father Flanagan in M.G.M.'s *Boys Town*. *Daily Variety* called it "a tear-jerker of the first water." Ten years later the world saw Pat O'Brien as *Fighting Father Dunne*. *The Hollywood Reporter* said: "The picture has a touch of everything—hokum, humor, melodrama and tear-jerking sequences. The way O'Brien (portraying Father Dunne) gathers funds and the methods he uses to keep his boys in line are amusing and, at times, rather inspiring."

*I Confess* was Alfred Hitchcock's movie about a young Roman Catholic priest who had heard an account of a murder in the confessional and is later accused of committing the same murder. Unable to violate the traditional secrecy of the confessional, he is prepared to sacrifice his own life to be true to his priesthood. *The Hollywood Reporter* said: "Taking murder and the sanctity of the church confessional as the main themes, [Hitchcock] has evolved a thrilling motion picture that achieves a peak of suspense from the very start and maintains it consistently throughout its 95 minutes." In its critical appraisal of Montgomery Clift's role as the young priest, *The New Yorker* said that Mr. Clift "was ill-advised to portray the priest as a sort of bemused juvenile, plainly too abstracted to lead one lamb, let alone a flock."

In 1945 Gregory Peck won wide acclaim in his first important screen role portraying Father Francis Chisholm in *Keys of the Kingdom*. *Life* said: "Though it is difficult to imagine anyone so imposingly handsome achieving failure in any field, Mr. Peck re-creates Father Chisholm's saga of discouragement and faith with fine sincerity and restraint." The fundamental theme in the movie was examined by the *New York Times*: "[It] is just a wistful irony—the irony that a life of good works should not be appreciated to its fullest due. And this theme is developed entirely by showing, in lengthy flashbacks, the patient and tireless toiling of a missionary in a Chinese village some years ago. It is wholly an episodic account." This observation came from *Time*: "[It] lacks the parochial authenticity, the comic pathos and the sagacious acting which made *Going My Way* the best of all movies about priests. But it is rather more attentive



to religion, and its religiousness is not only free of pomp and sanctimony but is also human, dramatic and moving."

"Sincerity" got worked over by the newspaper critics when they looked at Mr. Peck's portrayal of Father Chisholm. The Los Angeles *Times* said: "Most sincere." *Daily Variety* said: "Stirring sincerity." Louella O. Parsons, in the Los Angeles *Examiner*, said: "He is so earnest, so sincere, so spiritual; yet, withal a man, simple, courageous, and unselfish. Best of all, Gregory Peck is believable because he is real."

A few years earlier Jennifer Jones had won an Oscar for the year's best performance by an actress in *Song of Bernadette*. The film called forth high praise from Critic Edwin Schallert of the Los Angeles *Times*: "It is the most moving picture spiritually that has ever been made. It is a creation of supreme beauty, as reverential a tribute to a life dedicated to a world beyond as has ever been conceived for the films."

The distaff side again had its day when Ingrid Bergman co-starred with Bing Crosby in *The Bells of St. Mary's*. Before commencing the picture, Miss Bergman told a reporter of the Hollywood *Citizen-News*: "I am anxious to play the part. Catholic nuns have always been played with such tremendous seriousness and sometimes such severity. We want to show that the nuns are human and sweet, that they are real people, who want to help and advise others, but who also have a sense of humor."

Miss Bergman swung a baseball bat in the movie. Nuns were becoming liberated from stereotyped concepts, but were they entering promptly into new stereotyped concepts? Loretta Young and Celeste Holm played Roman Catholic nuns in *Come to the Stable* and, once again, we saw nuns engaged (in habit) in sports activity, this time a tennis match. *Time* said: "A lighthearted parable of faith. . . . Without being either preachy or self-conscious, the picture turns a religious situation into good entertainment, at the same time mixing its chuckles with a few well-timed lumps in the throat." Classifying *Come to the Stable* as an example of "the religion-with-chuckles type of movie," *The New Yorker* said: "The nuns are so remarkably glamorous that it is hard to imagine that they spent their novitiate very far from Elizabeth Arden's, and I'm afraid that their antics are not only highly unbelievable but singularly inappropriate to the dignity demanded by their calling." *The Hollywood Reporter* observed: "For every chuckle there is a heart tug and for every problem there is the age-old answer—faith." In the movie, two sisters from France engage in establishing a children's hospital, and can achieve their purpose only by working zealously to raise funds.

## III

The cardinal sin in a "religious" movie or TV-radio show is to be "preachy." Commending *Come to the Stable*, *Life* observed that it was "never preachy." Referring to the late Humphrey Bogart's portrayal of a soldier masquerading as a Roman Catholic priest in *The Left Hand of God*, *The Hollywood Reporter* said that the actor "manages to be inspirational without being preachy" and observed that this is "a thing rare in religious pictures." Speaking of *Going My Way*, *Life* said:

Leo McCarey (who, like his good friend Crosby, is a devout Catholic) directed *Going My Way* reverently without making it mushy with sentimentality. In it he preaches no sermons, propounds no theological dogma. The result is a fine, human movie which, for all its harmless fun, has met with the complete approval of those Catholics who have already seen it.

The Los Angeles *Times* wisely and sadly observed about John Ford's *The Fugitive*: "For Hollywood it is doubly rare in that it teaches without preaching; yet this strength may prove a weakness with the vast unsubtle public at large, who will see it as a Passion Play without passion." Two years later, *Stars in My Crown* drew this accolade from *Variety*: "There's no Holy Joe-ing in the story."

What is preaching, as these newsmen call it? Seemingly it is direct moralizing, in some cases, and being obvious about one faith in overt or pietistic ways, in other cases. The fighting priest in *On the Waterfront* was not accused of being "preachy," yet he literally preached a sermon in the film. The sermon itself came out of the depths of the priest's being, and he was obviously related to the subject of his sermon. Realism, then, is not found objectionable by the Fourth Estate, while preaching out of context is. Again, Robert Donat's sermon (that of an Anglican priest) in the British film *Lease of Life* was found arresting and important. The priest obviously *meant* what he was talking about, and this factor changed the whole course of the story.

Needless to say, "preaching" occurs in various contexts, in any number of ways, and sometimes most effectively when it is being done only implicitly. One notes the simplification of *Life's* comment about Mr. McCarey's work on *Going My Way*, to the effect that he "preaches no sermons." No, not explicitly, not obviously; yet the thinking of millions of Roman Catholics and non-Roman Catholics about the Church and the priesthood was being vitally affected. In many places, at many times, one encounters the same naïveté as displayed by *Life* in 1944 about Mr. McCarey's work. One finds this naïveté in press statements made by heads

of Hollywood motion picture studios, to the effect that a particular film is not a "message" movie, or that there is no place for "message" movies. Every film is quite obviously a "message" film—a "preachy" one, in various ways—commencing with a point of view, portraying thought and action, molding response and reaction. But we have learned to disguise our preaching, especially out of the pulpit. This is one of the rules of "success." One finds commendable aspects in this situation, for it cuts away much fat and can assist a climate of intellectual honesty. However, it can also dull the proclamation of truth to a particular situation, and can laugh out of a room simple, honest conviction.

*Going My Way* won awards of all kinds, including Hollywood Oscars. It also made money. "Yes, it is a religious picture," wrote Louella O. Parsons in the Los Angeles *Examiner*, "but it is religion brought straight into everyday life—religion that isn't austere or imposing, but warm and tender with undertones of good humor." The Hollywood *Citizen-News* commented: "The film brought home the practical side of faith, the use of religion in everyday life. It brought to the screen a phase of the Catholic faith seldom pictured."

"CLERICAL CALLERS: *Going My Way* Gives a Human Picture of Men of God for a Change." This was a New York *Times* headline, on May 7, 1944, over a comment by Bosley Crowther. He wrote:

As a general rule, the people out there in Hollywood have a strangely pious conception of any man who wears the cloth. And they double up with unction when they put one on the screen. They usually smear him well with honey—or, worse yet, they give him an air of highly self-conscious informality which is as mushy as a plate of oatmeal. Particularly annoying is the "Pat O'Brien type" of Catholic priest, which has become on the screen as stock a character as the big-hearted Irish cop. Such insufferable representations of professional piety are an offense to the sensibilities of people who are not nationalistic in their creeds. In *Going My Way* we find a truly delightful comprehension of the characters of two men of God. No stuffed-shirts or pietists are these padres; they are thoroughly honest and real. Their natures are as normal as a nipper's and their wits are as spry as a wag's. And this is not to say they are ungodly. Their devotion is plainly revealed. But they are here concerned with such things as are Caesar's—such things as we all understand.

It would be a deceptively simple thing to engage in another kind of stereotype as a reaction against one particular kind of stereotype. The mass media would do better to deal with the individual person of a certain clergyman in a certain story than to offer the public priest-rabbi-pastor types. This would permit a clergyman legitimate character-development as a person reacting to forces, persons, and events around him. We are, however, too much prone in mass media portrayals of clergy to commence with

rigid categories of personality, such as "pietist" or "tough guy" or "Bing Crosby" or "sincere pastor" or "intense man" or "gentle priest" or "Karl Malden." Malden was the fighting priest in the great film of 1954, *On the Waterfront*. John McCarten wrote in *The New Yorker*: "As the priest who comes to the realization that the hold of a ship is just as good a place for religion as any temple, [he] is superb." The portrayal of the priest in *On the Waterfront* was creatively developed and free of clichés. But could this be said if other producers tried to imitate the portrayal in other stories and cash in on its success?

For years Hollywood has tended in practice (and, of course, there are important exceptions) to equate Christian with Roman Catholicism—at least in its screen efforts. The Roman cleric is immediately recognizable as a man of the cloth. Roman Catholic services are more recognizably liturgical. Contrast the two marriage ceremonies in George Stevens' production of *Giant*. There is, on the one hand, the bourgeois, fashionable, more-social-than-religious Protestant service in an elegant home. On the other hand, there is the more primitive, moving, more-religious-than-social Roman Catholic ceremony, showing the Mexican priest pronouncing blessing and a gaunt, wooden crucifix revealing the Christus, arms outstretched, surveying the scene. It is admitted in the film industry that it is easier to ask technical advice of the Roman Catholic Church because there is a definite answer to questions, such as other denominations or other schools of churchmanship may not be able to state so clearly and authoritatively.

#### IV

Protestantism's major scoring effort in Hollywood films seems to have been Twentieth Century-Fox's 1955 release, *A Man Called Peter*. The film adaptation of Mrs. Peter Marshall's best-selling story of her late husband's ministry, it was a surprisingly strong box-office contender. Back in 1941 Frederic March as a Methodist minister in *One Foot in Heaven* had played only a single disappointing week at the Radio City Music Hall in New York City. The critics liked the film. In *PM*, Cecilia Ager said:

[It] dares to be a movie about religion without sanctimony. It doesn't bedevil you with misplaced piety. It portrays a preacher without gushing over him, it presents him as no more than a man doing his job, which job requires the constant co-operation of his whole family, without always constant or commensurate rewards. This is not the sort of material that provides obvious movie excitement. It has no thrills; it can evoke only admiration for its integrity as a movie, give insight into a kind of life not heretofore mulled over much, and yield an all-over gentle warmth from the basic goodness of its subject matter.

This movie provided one of the few opportunities for a Protestant clergyman to reach the Hollywood screen in a significant portrayal essential to story development. Often a non-Roman clergyman is pulled in for a quickie marriage scene, of course. However Mr. March's role was a big one. *Time* observed that Mr. March "poses, postures, struts his Shakespearean dignity to his heart's sweet content. It is a first-rate job—possibly because in many a good minister there is a forgivable touch of theatrics." Mr. Crowther spoke of Mr. March in the *New York Times* and observed:

[He] is truly excellent as a man of stout conviction and resolute faith—a man who is not above a bit of honest chicane when it is a matter of coaxing a new Tree of Jesse window out of a parishioner or disposing of an unmelodious choir, but who is blessed with a deep humanity and walks in paths of righteousness all his life. Only the final sequence, in which Mr. March plays "The Church's One Foundation" on the new carillon and the citizens all look up with beaming faces, slips into mawkishness. But that may be excused.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer made *Stars in My Crown*, about a virile Protestant evangelist who conducts his first Bible reading from the bar of a small Western-town saloon with two guns at his side. The film was labeled "family appeal" and concerned human relations in a rural setting. The story was about McCrea's entry into a small village, just after the Civil War, with Bible in hand, determined to preach the Word of God. *Variety* said: "McCrea is as human and likeable as any of his flock. He's ready with a quote or a fist to settle trouble or injustice, and has the wit to handle problems without physical might when needs be." *Time* observed: "The movie is as corny, and often just as pleasantly mellow, as a fond recollection of barefoot boyhood—which is what it is."

A big-budget, widely advertised film about a Protestant minister was 1957's *Battle Hymn*, the screen dramatization of Col. Dean Hess's organization of the famed 1951 airlift in which Korean orphans were flown to safety on Cheju Island. The *New York Times* reported that the film "follows religiously the line of mingled piety and pugnacity." The essential vocation of Col. Hess, a Disciples of Christ minister, is subject to some confusion in the film. The picture seemed more of an adventure film than one dealing seriously, at a depth level, with Christian insights, though Col. Hess's obligation to kill in war is examined from the standpoint of Christian ethics. The device of using an elderly Chinese philosopher to depict Col. Hess's "conscience" was not altogether successful, and what he said in the film is more "religious" than it is Christian.

The Hollywood biblical presentations—generally in spectacle form as,



for example, *David and Bathsheba*, *Samson and Delilah*, and *The Ten Commandments* (the latter budgeted at a record \$13,500,000)—have elicited sharp press comment in some quarters and an almost droll, unconcerned comment reflecting merely popular opinion in other quarters. William Lee Miller wrote in *The Reporter* about Hollywood's biblical movies:

[They are] a grafting of biblical figures onto essential modern categories. They make mention of earth and hell, but the message comes straight from Hollywood. This message is that the real world is that of size, color, sex, noise, thrills and that we are not long for it. The biblical movies appeal to the same motives and imply the same scale of values as the super and science fiction pictures. . . . [While the appeal is escapist and authoritarian], the whole approach is literal and materialistic. . . . God becomes a kind of super magician who works strictly physical and capricious miracles, and the Bible is treated primarily as a book of tall tales about His tricks.

From 1912's *From the Manger to the Cross* to 1954's *Day of Triumph*, the life of Jesus Christ has been seen a number of times on the screen. Now several new, highly budgeted movies based on the life of Jesus are in preproduction. There has been a large number of pictures in the category of obvious general religious appeal to a safe box-office: *The Silver Chalice*, *The Robe*, *The Miracle of Fatima*, and *Demetrius and the Gladiators*, to cite just a few. In 1957 Deborah Kerr, who had portrayed an Anglican nun in *Black Narcissus* several years previously, played a Roman Catholic nun opposite Robert Mitchum as a marine in *Heaven Knows, Mr. Allison*. Another group of films has featured the portrayal of Episcopal bishops and priests: *The Bishop Misbehaves* (1935), *The Bishop's Wife* (1947), *Lease of Life* (1954), *The Holly and the Ivy* (1954), and *The Leather Saint* (1956).

Many millions of persons throughout the world look at globally distributed movies based on religious themes. One realizes how powerful the movie makers are in their ability to mold the way countless men, women, and children regard the Church, the Christian life, a pastor's vocation, and even the life of Jesus Christ. The Church itself is influenced, in the way it regards itself, by mass media stereotypes. The press on the one hand accentuates or magnifies existing popular, or mass media, stereotypes; and, on the other hand, creates new stereotypes, sometimes by publicizing new mass media portrayals. Religiosity is rooted in mass culture—and the gentlemen and ladies of the press, in reporting and interpreting mass culture, wield a powerful influence.

# The Recovery of Jonathan Edwards: A Review

WALDO BEACH

ONE OF THE MOST important trends in the world of scholarship during the last quarter-century has been the recovery of a positive appreciation for Calvinism and all its good works. It was not long ago that the "liberal mind" in America was inclined to treat disparagingly the whole Calvinist-Puritan mode of thought, and to perpetuate the mental image of the Calvinist as dour, narrow, and bigoted, with a face "like the edge of a hatchet dipped in vinegar," of dyspeptic theology and a negative legalistic ethic—from all of which, it was assumed, we are happily emancipated. One of the common figures cited in support of this stereotype was the latter-day Calvinist Jonathan Edwards, and his horrifying sermon on "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God."

Thanks to the labors of scholars like Perry Miller, William Haller, and many others, this facile image is being replaced by a much more subtle and impressive one. The Calvinist, on second and closer look, emerges as a figure of grand proportions, of massive and disciplined intellectual power and of dynamic moral integrity, a man of zest and lively delights, of considerably greater stature, perchance, than the "organization man" of mid-twentieth century.

This trend toward the recovery of a positive appreciation of our Calvinist heritage will be furthered by an editorial venture now in process: the publication of all of the works of Jonathan Edwards, who has been by all odds America's most formidable theologian. Under the general chairmanship of Perry Miller of Harvard, a committee of scholars is hard at work preparing the texts and writing introductions for all of Edwards' major works, some of them, like his *Miscellanies*, never before printed in full. It now appears that the total series, which the Yale University Press is undertaking, may eventually come to between twenty-five and thirty volumes.

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It is not difficult to verify the claim Perry Miller makes in his prefatory note to the first volume of this series, that Edwards is "the greatest philosopher-theologian yet to grace the American scene." His precocious brilliance was displayed even before his student days at Yale, in fugitive pieces on science and philosophy. Throughout his several New England pastorates, before he was called to the Presidency of the College of New Jersey (where he died of smallpox), his intellectual energy was prodigious and his output enormous, especially during the years 1750-1757 when he was pastor at a mission church in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, out on the frontier. He wrote his major theological treatises, the makings of an uncompleted Protestant *Summa*, under straitened domestic circumstances and always in precarious health. That he studied on the average thirteen hours a day, in a household of numerous children, while also fulfilling his pastoral duties to the white settlers and Indians, says something about the creativity and self-discipline of his type of Calvinism. (His was the day, patently, before the era of committee meetings and organizational busyness.)

His major theological contribution was to restate and defend the main tenets of Calvinism against the enervations and loosening which endangered the faith. Yet Edwards' defense was much more than a reissue of Calvin. It was also a creative encounter of orthodoxy with the tenets and thought forms of eighteenth-century rationalism, the new philosophy of Locke, and the categories of the science of his day. Edwards' century was the "Age of Reason," not the age of paradox, and he was prepared to defend his faith with every appeal to reason; his tight and scrupulous logic marks his conviction that God is to be honored by rigorous thinking no less than by the emotions of the heart. His defense of authentic "religious affections" involves no warrant for loose thinking.

The first volume in this republication is a happy and logical choice. Edwards' Treatise, *Freedom of the Will*, first published in 1754, enjoyed some nineteen separate editions in the hundred years following, and was in its day his most famous work. The work is also a foundation stone for Edwards' defense of orthodoxy against the defections of the Arminians. His own preface puts the matter thus:

Of all kinds of knowledge that we can ever obtain, the knowledge of God, and the knowledge of ourselves, are the most important. As religion is the great business, for which we are created, and on which our happiness depends; and as religion consists in an intercourse between ourselves and our Maker; and so has its foundation in God's nature and ours, and in the relation that God and we stand in to each other; therefore a true knowledge of both must be needful in order to true religion. But the knowledge of ourselves consists chiefly in right apprehensions concerning those two

chief faculties of our nature, the *understanding* and *will*. Both are very important: yet the science of the latter must be confessed to be of greatest moment; inasmuch as all virtue and religion have their seat more immediately in the will, consisting more especially in right acts and habits of this faculty. And the grand question about the freedom of the will, is the main point that belongs to the science of the will. Therefore I say, the importance of this subject greatly *demand*s the attention of Christians, and especially of divines.<sup>1</sup>

The Arminian position, in essence, was the claim that human moral worth is meaningful and action praiseworthy only if it presumes an open freedom of choice wherein the will is morally responsible. Edwards' counter-argument turns on his careful definition of terms and his acceptance of the premise of causation. There is no uncaused action, in a natural or moral sense, though there are different kinds of causes. To claim that the will is free in the sense of "uncaused" or spontaneous is nonsense, he says. A man is free to *do* as he pleases, but the question whether he can please as he pleases is absurd. For the will is turned this way or that by virtue of antecedent causes. The moral necessity which propels the will from within is of a different order from outer natural necessity, but either way the determinist position is incontrovertible. Such a determinism, far from undercutting "praise or blame" attached to moral action, actually is prerequisite for moral responsibility. Such a determinism, also, is the corridor direct to the grand truths of divine sovereignty, judgment, grace, and election. The theological assumption which underlies the logic is Edwards' animus to preserve the radical freedom of God's omnipotence.

This publication of Edwards' famous treatise is prefaced by a careful and cogent (if somewhat prolix) introduction by Paul Ramsey, in which the lines of the argument are reviewed and its significance in relation to the philosophy of Edwards' day is painstakingly defined. Ramsey finds that Locke in particular provides the psychological and epistemological springboard, and the differences and agreements are traced out. He finds also in Edwards a close agreement with Leibniz' principle of sufficient reason. The thought of the "Arminian" opponents, who provide the foil, Chubb, Whitby, and Isaac Watts, is reviewed and assessed. Ramsey's introduction is valuable for the light it throws on the intellectual climate of the eighteenth century and on both the responsiveness and opposition to it which Edwards displayed in his work.

The significance of this edition of all of Edwards' works, and the warrant for the Herculean editorial labor now being expended, will only become clear after the project has been completed and an assessment made

<sup>1</sup> From Author's Preface, p. 133.

of Edwards' place in the history of Christian thought. At first glance, it may seem that this particular piece is anachronistic, a period piece, which should be allowed to sleep, along with volumes of Puritan sermons, on library shelves. Yet a more serious assessment of Edwards would hardly settle for this. This work on the freedom of the will is not an archaism. It speaks to the perennial question of every generation of seekers. The debate between Calvinism and Arminianism is raised afresh in many a Religious Emphasis Week dormitory discussion, though the language may not be as staid or the logic as impeccable as that which Edwards brings to his work. In secular thought forms, essentially the same matter is debated in modern psychological theory. The puzzle of free will versus determinism is not likely to be resolved conclusively this side of the apocalyptic event, if then; but the case Edwards makes for a divine determinism which does not cancel but includes human responsibility has the ring of contemporaneity.

Gratitude, anticipatory and realized, is due to the committee of scholars for assuming this formidable task, and especially to the Yale University Press, for undertaking the publication of the series, whose drugstore sales are not likely to be heavy. This publication is in a sense a debt of tribute paid by Yale to one of its most distinguished sons, certainly among the theologians it nurtured the most brilliant. That the general editorial committee is headed by a Harvard professor and this volume edited by a Princeton professor is the mark of a kind of intellectual ecumenicity in the Ivy League, and of its common roots in New England Calvinism.



## Commentary

To the Editor of RELIGION IN LIFE

Dear Sir:

I have read John Knox's article, "The Church *Is* Christ's Body," with delight and high approval. He gives us hard, careful thinking within good writing. Theologically, too, this is one of the most adequate presentations of the subject I have read. The few misgivings I have with the article I shall put at the end, as almost a postscript.

At first I was taken aback by Professor Knox's statement that Christ uses the church as an agent or an instrument. This reads like the contentions of those who make merely a means of the church. But then he goes on to call the church the body of Christ, the "locus of personal existence." Such an assertion is biblically and historically correct and theologically sound. The church does not *represent* Christ or the Kingdom; it *is* the presence of Christ and the Kingdom. With all my heart I approve the following statements: "Not only is he known there; he can be known only there. This means that we can know nothing that is distinctly Christian except in or through the church. Indeed, we can go further than this and say that nothing such exists."

Dr. Knox then differentiates God's general revelation from his culminating revelation in Christ. The latter alone can be known only in the church. As a matter of fact, the unique events that underlie our whole Christian faith, he claims, can be known only within the church. Certainly, objective events took place publicly, like the life and teaching of Jesus and his death; but the Christian events that concern his person, his death and his resurrection have their meaning only within their interpretation by the church and its memory of them. The saving events can "be realized only through participation in the community's life."

The New Testament itself records this memory of the church, but not objectively so as to afford an external check on the Gospel by recourse to the "real facts." "The New Testament is a church book; the church wrote it, and only the church can read it." Even the resurrection is "only an inference from the essential being of the church" and the work of Christ is precisely the church, the revelation and empowering of *Agape*, the community of the Spirit, of the risen Christ. God himself, Dr. Knox affirms,

is not enclosed at all within the church. He is the God of heaven and earth, but he is known as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ only within the church. Even individual commitment to Christ can be real and full only within Christ's community.

In this very strong and clear Christian exposition of the church, with which I agree vigorously for almost all of it—what can cause my misgivings? Obviously some of these hesitations might be allayed in a fuller treatment.

My hesitations are mainly six: (1) Dr. Knox has not included the *meaning* of Jesus' life, death, resurrection. *Agape* is not only the kind of love that is found exclusively within the Christian community, as Dr. Knox rightly asserts, but it is also the kind of love that can be identified and meaningfully defined. It is the God-centered, unconditional, universal love revealed in Jesus Christ (as such *Agape* becomes explicit standard, judgment and direction). Of course such love has no reality apart from God, Christ and the church; but with its significance made explicit it can be preached, can convict and can be a standard for growth in grace.

(2) If my first contention is right, the Bible should also be more than a memory to be relived within the life of the church. Although the Bible was written by the church and must be interpreted by the church, its message is also a blueprint for the church. The memory of the church can therefore be *corrected* as well as *refreshed* by the Bible. In this sense the Bible acts as an objective aid to the life of the church and has a measure and manner of objective being and use.

(3) In the same way the objective events on which the Christian faith are founded are more than memories of the church, in the sense of its continual reliving and reinterpreting them. The resurrection, for instance, is not only an inference from the memory or the being of the church, but also an objective fact for continual encounter *correcting poor and false memories*. The church which no longer remembers that Christ is risen and that we shall rise with him, now and after death, is no longer the Christian church. Although the historic fact can neither be understood aright nor accepted for salvation apart from the life of the church, there is also a sense in which the risen Christ is the creator of the church and in which he can be preached to those *outside* the church for knowledge of the Gospel, repentance and salvation.

(4) Dr. Knox recognizes the fact that God is more than the God of the church. Saint Paul does, too, when he points out in his Letter to the

Romans that the Jews and the Gentiles worship the same God, "for God is one." But beyond the *recognition* of this fact we need the *relation*. At least some indication should be given to the fact that the relation is of utmost importance for the life and work of the church. Tillich, for instance, makes "community" the common denominator and speaks of "the latent church." In Dr. Knox's article I find no indication, even by a phrase, that such a relation is demanded. Of course the Person and events are central to the revelation, but the meaning secondarily of the Person and the events is needed for the working out of the relation that has been recognized.

(5) The new creature in Christ cannot be apart from the new community in Christ. This is true; yet God relates himself peculiarly to the person as well as the people. Catholicism here needs Protestantism! Before God's revelation in the church came his revelation in Jesus for the church. The Son and the Spirit must neither be separated nor merged in the Spirit. Dr. Knox's total stress, I believe, is conducive to collectivism. More stress is called for on the inviolate individuality of each person everlastingly beyond every unimaginable fulfillment in the new community in Christ, here and in heavenly places. Such a stress also makes for fuller creativity and responsibility.

(6) There needs to be distinct differentiation between the church as the new community in Christ and the church as an organization. In the first instance Cyprian's dictum that there is "no salvation outside the church" states a fact; in the other, we have the idolatry of the institution which is heavily responsible for the inquisition and the pogroms. And yet the two aspects of the church must be definitely related, for in this world we do not have the one without the other.

I am immensely pleased with Dr. Knox's point of view and presentation. I write this commentary because I am also concerned that these further constructive needs be not overlooked.

Faithfully in Christian Fellowship,

NELS F. S. FERRÉ

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## Book Reviews

**Revivalism and Social Reform.** By TIMOTHY L. SMITH. New York: Abingdon Press, 1957. 253 pp. \$4.00.

With the addition of two well-written chapters, an annotated bibliography, and an index, the Frank S. and Elizabeth D. Brewer Prize Essay for 1955 of The American Society of Church History has become this book. The added chapters are, "Christian Liberty and Human Bondage: the Paradox of Slavery" and "The Spiritual Warfare Against Slavery."

The gist of the book, in the author's own words, "is simply that revival measures and perfectionist aspiration flourished increasingly between 1840 and 1865 in all the major denominations—particularly in the cities. And they drew together a constellation of ideas and customs which ever since have lighted the diverging paths of American Protestantism. Lay leadership, the drive toward interdenominational fellowship, the primacy of ethics over dogma, and the democratization of Calvinism were more nearly fruits of fervor than of reflection. The quest of personal holiness became in some ways a kind of plain man's transcendentalism, which geared ancient creeds to the drive shaft of social reform. Far from disdaining earthly affairs, the evangelists played a key role in the widespread attack upon slavery, poverty, and greed. They thus helped prepare the way both in theory and in practice for what later became known as the social gospel" (p. 8).

By revivalism the author means that type of mass evangelism which employs "special efforts to secure conversions amidst excited group emotions," and he conclusively demonstrates its popularity not merely with rude circuit riders on the frontier but with the ablest and most sophisticated urban preachers. He leaves no question either but that Christian perfectionism went hand in hand with such revivalism in all denominations. And he shows that both glowed brightest in the fires of millennial expectation. That all these were not divorced from social concern and ethical demand is the burden of his argument. "Whatever may have been the role of other factors, the quest for perfection joined with compassion for poor and needy sinners and a rebirth of millennial expectation . . . [made] popular Protestantism a mighty social force long before the slavery conflict erupted into war" (p. 149).

The author is a former associate professor of history at the Eastern Nazarene College, Wollaston, Massachusetts, and is presently pastor of the First Church of the Nazarene, Boulder, Colorado. He is the first to admit that he holds a deep affection for the faith of the revivalists whose place in history he is examining. As a historian, however, "accuracy and impartiality" have been his ideals, and he has been as true to them as only a scholar can be.

Without detracting from his accomplishment, still it can be said that he occasionally claims too much. "It is true," he says, "that at the end of the century liberal theology and social Christianity replenished the dying stream of interdenominational harmony. But its headwaters were the springs of brotherly zeal which broke forth in the generation of Robert Baird and A. B. Earle" (p. 85). Perhaps it would be better to say that both movements were part of a recurring trough between the crests of sectarianism than that one was the headwaters and the other a tributary.

And again he contends that "the evangelical ideology of the millennium merged without a break into what came to be called the social gospel" (p. 235). Surely the work of such men as Gladden, Rauschenbusch, and McConnell may be at least as

much a reaction against, as a flowering of, revivalism. One might as well contend that the theology of the social gospelers "merged without a break" into that of the neo-orthodox! That one preceded the other in time, and that the later owed its debt to the earlier is of course true. But we ought not to blur the distinctiveness of each, either. As Dr. Smith says, the revivalists "thought individual regeneration a chief means of social reform" (p. 151). Was it not precisely because later men realized that individual regeneration in itself was not effecting social reform that the "social gospel" arose? If there is no distinction here, then Billy Graham ranks with the social gospelers!

Dr. Smith implies that revivalism ought still to be Protestantism's chief cutting edge. "The myth persists that revivalism is but a half-breed child of the Protestant faith, born on the crude frontier, where Christianity was taken captive by the wilderness. The triumphs of Billy Graham, in prim Boston and ancient Oxford no less than in adolescent Los Angeles, point to another interpretation" (p. 79). What we need is more of the "old-time religion." Yet in its time revivalism was a new approach and one with a theology far from orthodox! According to Dr. Smith himself, "in the nineteenth century revival measures, being new, usually went hand in hand with progressive theology and humanitarian concern" (p. 60), and again, "liberalism on social issues, not reaction, was the dominant note which evangelical preachers sounded before 1860" (p. 151). Are the theological reactionaries of today the true descendants of the liberals of yesterday? Are there no new insights and methods as suitable for the twentieth century as revivalism was for the nineteenth?

The book is thoroughly documented from contemporary sources, but I had the feeling that it was chiefly a study of pre-Civil war Protestantism north of Mason and Dixon's line and that some consideration should have been given to southern urban centers and publications. I also felt that a concluding chapter would have helped.

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**Religion, Society and the Individual.** By J. MILTON YINGER. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1957. xvi-655 pp. \$6.75.

The current renewal of interest in the sociology of religion as an academic discipline is signaled by the appearance of Professor Yinger's textbook, subtitled "An Introduction to the Sociology of Religion." This much-needed volume follows by a decade his earlier contribution, *Religion and the Struggle for Power*.

The chief value of this work is its codification of the research and literature in the field. Although it does not advance many new points of view, it does synthesize much of what is extant and puts this material within a theoretical framework.

The author brings to his examination of religion that school of sociological theory known as functionalism, which is concerned not so much with the question, "What is religion?" but rather with "How does religion operate?" "How does religion contribute to the ongoing life, continuity, and persistence of a society?" From such a perspective, religion (or its "functional alternative") is seen as a "permanent, necessary, and inevitable part of human life" (p. 309).

Professor Yinger seeks to employ a consistent functional approach to his study of the dynamic interaction of religion with society, culture, and personality. His analysis covers the origin of religion, its organizational structure, its leadership patterns, its functions in the political and economic arena, its relationship to experiences of



personal crises and frustration, and its roles in society as integrator and in social change as initiator and conserver. The scope of the literature reviewed on each of these themes is very impressive.

In an attempt to make the book acceptable both to his sociological colleagues and to those in theological circles, the author is very cautious and modest in his claims and careful in his methodology. Nevertheless, both the sociologist and the theologian will want to raise questions for further consideration. Is the author's analysis of religion limited by a too-consistent functional approach? Does his theoretical framework enable him to probe sociologically the inner meaning and depths of the phenomenology of religion? Does sociology "inevitably take a naturalistic view of religion"? (p. 307) Is religion merely a product of culture? Does not religion—or better, religious faith—also transcend its cultural bounds and historical particularity?

The second half of the book is a reader in the sociology of religion. This is the first of several attempts now under way to bring together fugitive materials of a theoretical and an empirical nature. The author has chosen wisely from the works of past and present scholars in a way which roughly parallels the discussion in the first part of the book. It is the author's hope that the reader of these brief selections (from the works of men such as Weber, Tawney, Simmel, Parsons, Niebuhr, Pope, Fichter, Muelder, and Sklare) will be stimulated to consult the original studies.

Although this book now stands alone as the only first-rate, readable textbook in the field, it does not quite measure up to the promise and challenge issued by the author himself in an earlier paper on "The Present Status of the Sociology of Religion" (*The Journal of Religion*, July, 1951). This paper suggested various hypotheses on the role of religion in contemporary society which needed testing. Perhaps in the next decade we can expect this more incisive study to issue from the lucid pen of the Oberlin professor.

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*Ed. Note:* There is also a "trade edition" of this book entitled *Religion, Society and the Individual, Part I*, xi-322 pp., \$5.00. This omits the valuable readings of the second half of the book.

**Christianity and Economic Problems.** By D. L. MUNBY. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1956. ix-290 pp. \$5.00.

It is refreshing to read in a work of this kind that "the wise man will steer clear of the unproven assumptions of those who argue hotly on each side" (p. 234), and "I have not attempted to hide my presuppositions and prejudices" (p. 251). Such an appetizer, even though coming late in the course of the intellectual repast, assists appreciably in its digestibility. The statements quoted confirm the impression that Munby attempts to steer a certain and unequivocal path through the morass of conflicting views on the subject. His treatment is both positive and constructive while remaining free from either religious or economic dogmatism. If he speaks with authority as an economist, he also speaks with understanding as a Christian.

Part I of the book establishes the premises from which the author starts, covering as it does the meaning and significance of the Christian faith and ethics, the nature of economics, and the presuppositions of economists. Part II deals with particular economic problems, such as wealth and poverty, full employment, the price system, etc.

Part III incorporates the author's conclusions as to the role that he thinks Christians ought to play in meeting the economic realities of life.

Possibly the key to Munby's thinking is found in the following: "The theological truths of the Christian faith provide insights as to the dimensions of human nature, and an understanding of its pattern; but they have to be interpreted in terms of the particular social reality of a given era. It is only out of a patient study of the actual facts of any society that we can come to see how the insights of the Christian faith are relevant and how the basic pattern unfolds itself. Without such an understanding of what is happening in society, and how its economic framework fits together, the application of general principles becomes arbitrary, irrelevant and meaningless" (p. 252).

In many respects, one feels that this work accomplishes in one volume what the Federal Council of Churches attempted to do in six. As compared with the Federal Council's series it has the advantage of conciseness and clarity and, in addition, is far better integrated. One concludes the reading with the impression that nothing has been left hanging in mid-air, even though no problems have been solved. But the author does not seek to solve problems. He is concerned that when we talk about Christianity and economic problems we know what we are talking about. It is, therefore, important that we have clearly in mind what the term "Christianity" encompasses, what are the economic problems of the world, and what, if any, connections exist between these areas. Currently one might be inclined to believe that the connections are correlative and casual rather than causal; Christianity being concerned with the good life, with ethical and metaphysical connotations, and economics being concerned with providing the goods of life, with material and sensual connotations. There is some reason to fear that the latter has unduly influenced the former, whereas the true relationship should be the reverse of this.

The problem is really one of orientation. The economic process must be reflected against goals that are in a Christian frame of reference and hence must be warped consciously in that direction. That the trend of modern thought is in this direction is evidenced by the report of the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Evanston in 1954, in the particular section dealing with "Social Questions—the Responsible Society in a World Perspective," sections of which Munby quotes with apparent approval.

One should not be deluded with the thought that the attainment of an "ideal" economic order is a simple process even if it were possible. We are living in a highly complex social environment which is infinitely varied in its relationships. "It is foolish to ignore that the political and economic order is concerned with the possible, and not with the ideal" (p. 262). But that is no reason why a start should not be made toward an order which has as its ethical foundation the Christian ideal. The failure to start, however, will not be the failure of "economics" but rather the failure of organized religion, which has compromised its principles, shirked its responsibilities, and basked too long in the warm effulgent rays of a comfortable and materialistic civilization. Economics will continue to direct its efforts toward the utilization of scarce means to attain the ends which society considers to be the most important.

In this book Munby has made a significant and highly valuable contribution in dispelling the fogs from an area of low visibility.

ROBERT SCHULTZ

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**The Two Cities: A Study of God and Human Politics.** By JOHN A. HUTCHISON. New York: Doubleday & Company, 1957. 190 pp. \$3.50.

The chief concern of this book is to indicate the relation between Christianity and politics. The audience it has in mind is of two types, namely those Christians who do not see how or why their faith involves social and political consequences, and those modern defenders of democracy who do not understand or appreciate the tradition of Judeo-Christian or biblical faith. Written without any encumbering scholarly apparatus and without pretending to offer any new information based upon special research, Dr. Hutchison has written a lucid summary of the continuing interplay between biblical faith and alternative beliefs as these affect political thought and practice.

When St. Augustine spoke of the *City of God* he did not have in mind the Church, nor did he equate the earthly city with that human society which exists outside the Church. The two cities of which he spoke represent two broad classifications of men whose lives are built upon fundamentally different principles. "These two cities," wrote St. Augustine, "were made by two loves: the earthly city by the love of self unto the contempt of God, and the heavenly city by the love of God unto the contempt of self" (Bk. 14, c. 28). The force of Augustine's analysis derives from the philosophy of history which undergirds his conception of the two cities, for he holds that the manifold evils of society come about through man's disordered love and through his naïve expectation that true peace and order can come from a principle other than the love of God. Indeed, St. Augustine believed that internal strife and discord in society were inevitable as long as man built his society on the principle of self-love, for he would thereby inevitably set into motion forces and motives which could not create but would destroy community. History, then, represents successive attempts by men to build the orderly city, but these are all doomed to decomposition until at last men are bound together in the love of God.

This Augustinian view is the starting point of Dr. Hutchison's book and in his helpful opening chapter he supplements it with the more specifically biblical elements to form the full perspective from which he views the problems of social and political life. Beginning with the early biblical Hebrews, the author traces the successive encounters of biblical faith with "worldly" beliefs as he takes the reader through the periods of the Prophets, Jesus and New Testament Christianity, the development of Greek views of man, reason and constitutionalism, the Roman conception of law and empire, the medieval synthesis of Christian and Greek thought, the faith and new ethics of the Reformation, the impact of the Renaissance, Enlightenment and secularizing forces, the rise of economic individualism and capitalism, the emergence of modern liberal democracy, and the twentieth-century version of dictatorship as exemplified in Marxian Communism, Fascism, and Naziism.

The historical survey constitutes the bulk of the book and provides the layman with an excellent treatment of the major epochs of Western Civilization along with their systems of social and political beliefs. But this is not only a historical survey, for throughout the book Dr. Hutchison brings to bear the Augustinian and biblical categories of thought upon each epoch, thus providing a principle of criticism aimed at once against the claims and pretensions of both the secular and the Christian political philosophies.

The question the book raises is why the problems of human politics should be studied from the point of view of theology. The author does not by any means consider theology the only point of view possible, for his initial concern is simply to

present the theological interpretation along with other possible interpretations of political realities. But besides presenting the perspective of theology to the thoughtful layman, the author is here affirming his conviction that more than any other, the biblical view of human nature and history makes the problems of politics more intelligible, for it provides what Niebuhr has called a "Christian realism" which exposes the weakness and deceptiveness of man's natural optimism.

Thus the first type of audience, which comes upon these ideas for the first time, will find here an exposition of the historic interplay between Christian faith and political beliefs. The other audience, which wants to know why the Judeo-Christian faith should be considered in the understanding and defense of democracy, will find as the central argument Niebuhr's epigrammatic insight that it is this Christian realism which informs us that while man's capacities for justice make democracy possible, it is his tendency toward injustice that makes democracy necessary. This is to say that democracy rests not so much upon the dignity, rational capacity and virtue of man as upon the sinfulness of all men, for it is this theological insight into human nature that leads to the conclusion that nobody is good enough to have unlimited power over others. This book is the latest volume in the Christian Faith Series, of which Reinhold Niebuhr is the Consulting Editor.

SAMUEL ENOCH STUMPF

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**The Responsible Christian.** By VICTOR OBEHHAUS. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957. xi-219 pp. \$4.00.

Although the author states that his book is intended primarily for laymen, it could also be read with profit by the clergy. It is a discussion of Christian responsibility in the social and economic world.

Dr. Obenhaus, who is Associate Professor in the Federated Theological Faculty at the University of Chicago, maintains that all our actions reveal theological convictions and that there must be a close relationship between the Christian faith and the common life. He discusses Christian responsibility in the following areas: economic life, labor and industrial relations, agricultural policy, race, communism, public and private welfare, health, church and state, civil rights, and Christian vocation.

Without dogmatism, and with the assumption that no single formula can resolve the fundamental issues of society, Dr. Obenhaus seeks to clarify the issues in the complex social and economic issues of our day. In this task of clarification he is remarkably successful, and it is at this point that the book is most valuable. He writes as a committed Christian, yet he approaches his task with the objectivity and detachment which invites thoughtful consideration rather than violent reaction.

The author reveals a wide familiarity with the reports of the ecumenical conferences and of the study conferences sponsored by the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. His use of these materials gives valuable insight into the solid contributions being made by such discussions. Nevertheless he insists that discussions and pronouncements cannot alone solve the problems of our time. "A church content merely to extol principles," he says, "has in a considerable measure abdicated and defaulted. It has lost its capacity for leadership. The time requires prophetic action, and the area of prophetic action is the determination to achieve an ever larger measure of the Christian community" (p. 25).

Since this is so obviously a major concern of the author, it is surprising that the book offers very little guidance in social action. In the chapter on "Race," for instance, there is a section entitled "Now, What Do Christians Do?" In this section the reader is told that "we must *know* first, and then follows action" (p. 103). Yet the nearest thing to a specific suggestion for action is that "the work of the church must continue in the eradication of segregation" (p. 104).

Nevertheless the book is a valuable contribution. It can help its readers to gain the necessary background of knowledge without which action might be ill-advised. Persons interested in further study in any of the areas dealt with in the book will find the "Selected Readings" list at the end of the book a helpful guide.

JACKSON BURNS

St. Paul's Methodist Church, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

**The Dynamics of World History.** By CHRISTOPHER DAWSON. Edited by John J. Mulloy. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1956. 489 pp. \$6.00.

Few Christian historians in the last thirty-five years have written with more versatility or wisdom on such a wide range of questions of man's historical destiny than Christopher Dawson. In the eyes of some, he has formulated a conception of world history that, in scope and vision, ranks with the works of Spengler, Northrop, and Toynbee.

Christopher Dawson is known to many for his Gifford Lectures, *Religion and Culture* (1948), but he has in his lifetime of study and writing covered a prodigiously wide range of subjects. To bring into focus some of Dawson's amazing contributions to the field of comparative culture, John J. Mulloy has selected this portion of his earlier works and uncollected articles. The collection is one that rewards careful analysis by any serious student of history.

The first section of the book is devoted to Dawson's discussion of the nature of sociology and the elements in culture and society which he finds most significant. In a series of brilliant essays, he has treated such phenomena as the effect of warrior peoples on the decline of archaic civilizations and the way changes are set up which transform both the culture of the conquerors and that of the conquered.

One of the most stimulating chapters deals with the rise and effect of the patriarchal family in history. Moving from the primitive matriarchal society (a primitive family group consisted of a woman and her offspring) the trend of cultural evolution is usually to give increasing importance to the place of the male. Only in a patriarchal society, Dawson holds, in which the father assumes responsibility, the wife chastity and self-sacrifice, and the children a measure of obedience, can there be any high degree of cultural achievement. "The old type matrilinear society, though it is by no means devoid of moral discipline, involves considerably less repression and is consistent with a much laxer standard of sexual behaviour than is usual in patriarchal societies" (p. 159).

It is when Dawson opens his wide-angle lens and sweeps across the history of entire civilizations that his vision seems keenest and his gift for lucid expression is at its best. Always he presses toward a Christian philosophy of history, as he praises, examines, criticizes, and rejects the work of other historians. Whether he is expounding the two cities of St. Augustine, or admiring the literary skill of Gibbon while at the same time deploring his religious prejudices, Dawson speaks perceptively and from a Christian perspective. Thus he can see the apocalyptic element in Karl Marx's



dialectic, the shallow but real religious faith reflected in H. G. Wells' *Outline of History*, and the one-sidedness of Spengler's view of culture as an unconscious life process.

Most interesting to many will be Dawson's analysis of Arnold Toynbee, published in 1955 upon the completion of his ten-volume *A Study of History*. While impressed by Toynbee's amazing capacity for research and his ingenious classifications, Dawson calls his philosophy of history "too abstruse and learned for the man in the street and too speculative and ideological for the professional historian" (p. 395).

He likewise, in company with a host of other contemporaries, takes issue with Toynbee's religious syncretism. Such a marriage between the three high religions of the West which take history seriously (Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism) and those of the Far East which deny history seems utterly unrealistic to Dawson. Such a syncretism is not inconceivable, says he, "but we have no historical reason to suppose that it is possible and no theological reason for supposing it to be desirable or right" (p. 398).

Throughout his writings Dawson sees it as the task of Christianity to reconcile the conflicting demands of the spiritual and the material orders. Unlike the religions of the East, Christianity strives to change the world; unlike its secular rival, Communism, it sees that the end of history is not found in history but in eternity invading time.

PAUL M. PETTIT

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**Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age.** By a Co-Founder. New York: Harper & Brothers, by arrangement with Alcoholics Anonymous Publishing, Inc., 1957. 335 pp., \$4.00.

There are now three basic books in the official literature of Alcoholics Anonymous. The "Big Book" (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, 1939) might be called the "gospel" of the movement. It describes the experience and plan of redemption from alcoholism which has been "good news" to 200,000 alcoholics in twenty years. *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* (1953) might be described as the "epistles" of A.A. literature, in that the fundamental ideas of the movement are elucidated in systematic form against a background of practical problems. If one were to continue the biblical analogy, one would call this third book the "Acts of the A.A. Apostles." Whereas the first A.A. book was a collaborative creation by the first hundred members, books two and three have been written by the surviving co-founder, Bill W.

Here, in *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*, is a vivid first-person account of the origin and growth of what is probably the most amazing spiritual movement of our day. It is an "inside view" of A.A. told in warm, anecdotal style by the one man who was not only thoroughly involved but a prime mover in the events described. Here is the story of the personalities who helped to weave "the various strands which, woven together, have made the strong cable of A.A." Here is the gripping account of the early struggles, disagreements and discouragements which repeatedly threatened to capsize the little group of searching but sober alcoholics in the early days. Here is the inspiring story of how they were led by a "Power greater than themselves" in the trial-and-error development of the most effective approach for helping alcoholics ever devised.

This book, like the other two, is a must for anyone desiring a thorough under-

standing of A.A. It is a rich primary source of A.A. history. Equally important is the manner in which it reveals and records the mind and spirit of one of the spiritually great of our day, Bill W. In its pages one gets something of the refreshing openness, the lack of pretention and the depth of insight which one recognizes in a personal encounter with this lanky, homespun Vermonter.

The book begins with a panoramic sketch of the 1955 Twentieth Anniversary St. Louis Convention of A.A., interspersed with colorful reminiscences of the early days and the many individuals—alcoholics and nonalcoholics—who helped to launch A.A. The historical heart of the book consists of three talks given by Bill W. at the Convention, illustrated with a series of photographs of places and persons (non-alcoholics only) that figured prominently in the genesis and growth of A.A. The concluding part of the books consists of significant addresses by prominent non-alcoholic friends of A.A.

According to the author, A.A. "came of age" at St. Louis. At that gathering, full responsibility for guarding the Twelve Traditions (which protect A.A. from the perils of institutionalization) and for guiding the world-wide services of A.A. was officially transferred from the co-founders to an elected group of some seventy A.A. representatives to be known as the "General Service Conference." From the viewpoint of social psychology, A.A. still faces a time of testing when Bill W. passes from the scene, even though his leader-symbol influence will continue long after his death. But there can be little doubt that the establishment (with his full approval) of democratic machinery, as was done at St. Louis, will reduce greatly the possibility of a sectarian power struggle within A.A. when the time comes. Whether or not A.A. has "come of age," it has taken a giant step toward maturation.

Through the pages of this book, there comes to the reader a sense of the profound spiritual significance of A.A. As Bill W. sat on the stage of Kiel auditorium in St. Louis and looked at the throng of 5,000 sober alcoholics from all over the world, he reports being "powerfully stirred by the wonder of all that had happened in the incredible twenty years" of A.A.'s existence. All of us who know and value A.A. might well join him in his reflection. "Who could possibly tell the vast consequences of what God's work through A.A. had already set in motion?"

HOWARD J. CLINEBELL, JR.

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**Delinquency: Sickness or Sin?** By RICHARD V. McCANN. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957. \$3.00.

No more baffling problem has arisen in modern culture than the community failure which we have named juvenile delinquency. This phenomenon is highlighted by the spiraling number of young people parading before the juvenile courts of the United States, the sharp rise in the percentage of crimes committed by adolescents, and the number of predelinquents being referred to social workers for counsel and guidance. No segment of society is free from it. Delinquency appears in every economic and social group and is found in every size and type of community in the country.

The tragedy of delinquency is not truly represented in a listing of statistics but in the squandered human values, the personal frustrations, the defeat of youth and parents in homes where the problem exists. This is a book about the failure of the

home, the school, and the churches to cope with a disease which is seriously affecting the lives of our youth, youth who are in search of self.

Dr. Richard McCann has rendered a service to the church and all community agencies in sharing through *Delinquency: Sickness or Sin?* the results of the "action research" project which he conducted as director of the Harvard Divinity School Seminar on Delinquency and as a member of the faculty of Andover Newton Theological School.

This book should be read by every clergyman, teacher, social worker, and parent. It is not another statistical analysis of trends or a review of sociological factors contributing to delinquency. Rather Dr. McCann brings the skills of social science to focus with the insights of religious education and theology on an understanding of this sickness of our modern culture.

Dr. McCann and his colleagues at Harvard and Andover Newton developed the project "for a study of the greater role which religion might play in preventing delinquency and in guaranteeing more useful lives for our youth." In the seminars emphasis was placed on a long-range concern for the role of the church in the reduction and prevention of delinquency. It was hoped that values would evolve of immediate benefit to the problem and also that ministers might be given an understanding of the conflicts, tensions, and deprivations of which delinquency is a symptom.

The book, through case studies, provides an opportunity to go into the homes and lives of a number of delinquent young people to see the factors which cause their delinquency. For the churchman this will be particularly valuable in bringing together the insights of sociology with a philosophy of Christian education and a theological understanding of the nature of man. This has long been needed, and Dr. McCann suggests that the church is concerned about delinquency from theological and religious grounds, as well as being concerned about the social problems which create delinquency and which it in turn creates.

Dr. McCann declares that one of the primary factors in delinquency is a "scarcity of admired persons" in the lives of young people. "We cannot escape the inference that the absence of effective, adequate models in essential and real relationships to the child is one basic factor predisposing the child toward delinquency." Without such models their self-image is confused, inadequate, and distorted. "This inadequate self-image is the rickets of the personality, the yaws of the character." With a meaningful self-image they can withstand reasonable amounts of conflict, criticism, and punishment. The delinquent conduct comes from their efforts to find a meaningful self-image and to gain the respect of others. However, these efforts are self-defeating for they isolate the child more completely from meaningful relationships.

Among the helpful contributions which the church can make is to provide an atmosphere of acceptance of persons, with particular reference to the delinquent and the young people with delinquent tendencies. This acceptance must become the atmosphere in which all of the work of the church is conducted and the quality which characterizes relationships. The author observes: "While it is true that the contagion of delinquency presents a real danger, the contagion of acceptance presents a real hope."

The church can provide, through group relationships, persons with whom youth can identify in their "search for self." The church can help strengthen the social resistance to crime and help reduce the compulsion of the individual to break through it. This must become integrated into the personality before it can become a deterrent to delinquency. The church can develop stronger identity-giving factors in its rituals,

give the adolescent increasing responsibilities in its work, through its members and clergy become personally acquainted with its young people, serve as "big brothers" and "big sisters" to young people who need the closer relations of responsible adults.

Dr. McCann believes that delinquency is a sickness of mind, personality, and spirit which results from a chain of influences over which the delinquent has little or no control. But while the delinquent is sick, his sickness is our sin. He observes: "The task of religion, as well as that of education and science, is to redeem him, to heal his isolation, to restore the broken lines of communication. It must bring him to a knowledge of his own self, the selves of others, and the Divine Self."

The author doubtless has had wide experience in working among delinquents and has experienced success in helping them to meaningful adjustments to their problems. However, one would wish that he had set forth the ways in which adults succeeded in achieving meaningful relations to these young people, how the church succeeded in making the values of religion attractive, and how they were able to help young people build up resistance to crime. These are easy goals to set for the church, but one would wish that this book offered more on the "how."

HAROLD W. EWING

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**Judaism—Or Jewish Nationalism: The Alternative to Zionism.** By ELMER BERGER. New York: Bookman Associates, 1957. 207 pp. \$3.00.

*Judaism—Or Jewish Nationalism* is primarily a tract on behalf of a specific organization, the American Council for Judaism. Secondly, it is a defense of a single individual, the author himself, Rabbi Elmer Berger.

Rabbi Berger does have something to say, and he says it with considerable felicity and clarity. For the most part, he wields his pen with adroitness and skill in the service of the American Council for Judaism. Often he gets involved in the inter-necine strife of the Jewish community, a strife that bewilders the non-Jew by its ferocity and acrimony and becomes only more confused and confusing by such an apologia as Berger's.

Three qualities are, however, lacking in this book: (1) originality, (2) sympathetic understanding, and (3) humility.

(1) Nothing *original* is to be found in these pages. Anything that was ever new or distinctive in Berger's views has been said by him as well, if not better, in his earlier books. One thing might be considered novel: the publication is full of attacks on Berger and the Council, "broken down and refuted, in depth, largely by the presentation of official, public statements of the American Council for Judaism." The refutations are redundant, rehashing old issues for pages on end.

(2) *Sympathy and understanding* for Zionist aspirations and for Israel's remarkable achievements in the decade are notably absent. For such eminent statesmen as Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion and Mrs. Golda Meir, he seems to have only contempt. How else shall one assess his statement about them and their colleagues in "the officialdom of . . . Israel . . . and everything they touch [as] 'Kike Business'?" He is likewise critical of the fund-raising campaigns of American Jewry and the generosity of these people for their kinsfolk in less fortunate lands.

(3) A *humble* spirit is also lacking, despite Rabbi Morris Lazaron's plea in the dedication for "an attitude of humility" on these matters. It is certainly not present

in the bibliography, where the books listed are predominantly by Rabbi Berger himself and the pamphlets suggested are solely those of his organization. One of the Rabbi's works has a title that is a study in modesty: *Who Knows Better Must Say So*. No less devoid of humility are the two pages devoted to an egregious excerpt from an address by Morris Ernst to a Cincinnati conference of the American Council for Judaism.

There is indeed a valid case for anti-Zionism, but *Judaism—Or Jewish Nationalism* does not present it. Nor does the book set forth, as its title promises, "The Alternative to Zionism."

There is a real need in our American society of democratic pluralism for an organization in Jewish life that can and will be constructively critical of Israel and the Israelis' unique achievements; that can and will warn the Jews of America of ambiguities in their allegiances, politically and spiritually, to both the United States and Israel; that can and will distinguish, without bitterness or self-righteousness, between a devotion to the ideals of Zionism and the loyalties of Israeli citizenship; that can and will point out where Israel—like the United States of America—does not measure up to the plumbline of the Hebrew prophets. But, judging from this book, neither the American Council for Judaism nor Elmer Berger meets this need.

Are there any alternative books and authors to suggest? Yes, there are at least four recent books which will really bring "facts to help you understand the Arab-Israeli conflict," as *Judaism—Or Jewish Nationalism* promises, but fails to do.

Foremost is Abba Eban's *Voice of Israel* (Horizon Press, 1957, 304 pp., \$3.95). As Ambassador from Israel to the United States and as head of his country's Permanent Delegation to the United Nations, the scholarly, eloquent Eban has given leadership of the highest order, and that scholarship, eloquence, and leadership are all found in this notable book. Here one is on Olympian heights in contrast to the miasmic mists of the swamps and quicksands in which Rabbi Berger stalks. Every chapter by Eban is a masterpiece of logic and rhetoric, be it a tribute to the late Chaim Weizmann or a memorial to Albert Einstein; an answer to the Security Council and the General Assembly concerning the reasons for Israel's actions and stands during the past decade or an address before a conclave of scholars at Notre Dame University. Accurate maps in the end-papers and tables of events add to the book's value.

Of somewhat different nature is the precise prose of Israel's Ambassador to the Court of St. James, the Hon. Eliahu Elath, delivered as lectures at Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts, in 1956 and entitled *Israel and Her Neighbors* (World Publishing Company, 1957, 90 pp., \$2.75). Elath's careful, scholarly treatments of "Population Problems in Israel," "Israel and the Middle East," and "The Bedouin and Their Problems" have a breadth of vision and a spirit of hope not found in Elmer Berger's book with its special pleading and narrow outlook.

A third work, which more directly answers *Judaism—Or Jewish Nationalism*, is the admirable little book by Dr. Irving Miller, rabbi of the Congregation Sons of Israel in Woodmere, New York, and chairman of the American Zionist Council. It is called *Israel—The Eternal Ideal* (Farrar, Straus, and Cudahy, 1955, 148 pp., \$2.75). In a genuinely fresh fashion, marked by an authentic spirit of humility, Rabbi Miller tells an old tale that could easily become trite. He lets no arrogance creep in and relates again the dramatic chronicle of how the hope of Israel never died in Jewish hearts, thus inspiring the Jews in the twentieth century to create a Third Jewish Commonwealth.



Lastly, a new and vital work, both prophetic and provocative, has been written by Waldo Frank, *Bridgehead: The Drama of Israel* (George Braziller, 1957, 220 pp., \$3.75). The eminent critic and novelist writes of his recent travels in Israel in a book that is poetic and sensitive but also dramatic and analytic. Waldo Frank mirrors in his moving prose the conflicts of mind and spirit which have gone on for decades amid his efforts to understand, appreciate, and yet weigh critically the claims of Zionism. Here are a subtle humor, many acute insights, and a clear style of writing.

These four books are excellent counters to Rabbi Berger's book and are all "musts" for collateral reading.

CARL HERMANN VOSS

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**The Scrolls and the New Testament.** Edited by KRISTER STENDAHL. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957. viii-308 pp. \$4.00.

**The Essenes and Christianity.** By DUNCAN HOWLETT. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957. vi-217 pp. \$3.50.

*The Scrolls and the New Testament* adds a new type of publication to the vast literature on the Dead Sea Scrolls. Here we have a collection of essays published, for the most part, in scholarly journals and constituting primary scholarship on the relation of the Scrolls to the New Testament. The materials contained in the volume, while often of a rather technical kind, are presented in lucid fashion, requiring no specialized knowledge for their comprehension. The editor and those who have assisted him in the task of translation of several of the articles have done a superb job.

Judgments may vary as to the relative importance of the different contributions. None of them, however, is without considerable significance for the understanding of the subject which provides the unifying characteristic of the volume: the relation between the Scrolls and the New Testament. Most of the contributors are specialists in New Testament. This fact is significant, inasmuch as the major volumes heretofore published have come, more often than not, from specialists in the field of Old Testament studies.

The opening chapter by the editor is, in the reviewer's judgment, one of the best of the lot. Professor Stendahl has provided much more than an introduction to the book. He has set the perspective in which the basic issue of the relation between the materials from Qumran and from the New Testament is to be faced. What he has to say is highly original and penetrating. He takes up the point that the rise of Christianity is now (in light of the Scrolls) considered by some to be no more than an episode in human history (p. 2) and shows just what this means. He concludes that this is not merely to be conceded but positively affirmed. By analysis of the eschatology of the Qumran sect (Stendahl gives his reasons—good ones—for speaking of it, and of Christianity, as a sect) and that of the New Testament, he shows that there is a *relative* difference, not an absolute one, between the two eschatologies. The key term in this connection is what Stendahl calls "anticipation" of the Last Day, the Parousia. There is, he concludes, a relative difference in the *degree* of anticipation of the Parousia in the two communities. The higher degree of anticipation in the New Testament community was, however, of decisive significance in the Church. This it was which "gave the church its Magna Charta to apply the heavenly forgiveness

already here and now, for those who accepted its Messiah. And, finally, it was this higher degree of anticipation which gave the church the possibility to spread among the Gentiles" (p. 17).

The roster of contributors whose articles account for the remainder of the volume is impressive indeed. Three articles by the foremost German scholar on the Scrolls, Karl Georg Kuhn, are particularly important (Chaps. IV-VI). Each of them represents a distinctive contribution to the understanding of the Scrolls. Bo Reicke's treatment of the constitution of the early Church (Chap. X) shows how both the Qumran community and the early Church had a hierarchic order which was, however, always responsible to the community as a whole. He also makes the interesting suggestion that the Council of the Qumran community probably did not consist of twelve laymen and three priests, but rather of a group of twelve, three of whom were priests (p. 151).

The chapters by W. D. Davies and Fitzmyer are also of special significance. Davies has already done much to clarify New Testament problems in light of their Jewish background and connections. Here (Chap. XI) he presents materials of great importance for anthropology and pneumatology in the Scrolls and in the New Testament. Father Fitzmyer's essay on the Ebionites and their relation to the Qumran community (Chap. XIII) is the best summary of the history and significance of the Ebionites available in English, quite apart from its value in connection with the question of the relation of the Ebionites to the Essenes.

Yet what has been said about the chapters specifically referred to applies also to the remainder of the chapters. This sort of publication should by all means be continued. A companion volume on the Scrolls and the Old Testament should be immediately undertaken, if such a publication is not already under way.

Duncan Howlett's book on the Scrolls is one of a type already familiar to English readers. It is, however, the best of the available publications on the subject written by a nonspecialist, in the judgment of the reviewer. Howlett has sought to make clear the historical background and the contemporary historical situation of the Qumran community. He has done an admirable job of summary of the important historical events of the relevant periods and has many worth-while suggestions concerning the possible connection of such events with the appearance of the community and the identification of its leading figures.

It is rather surprising to read that theologians have tended, in recent decades, to emphasize faith rather than history (p. 8) and that the discovery of the Scrolls has raised again the problem of the relation between fact and faith (p. 9)—as though this had not been precisely one of the major questions of biblical and theological scholarship during recent decades. Yet the author has important things to say on this subject and his volume represents, in general, a very helpful and worth-while interpretation of the Scrolls.

WALTER HARRELSON

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**The Gospels: Their Origin and Growth.** By FREDERICK C. GRANT. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957. viii-216 pp. \$3.75.

In 1933 Professor Grant composed a work on *The Growth of the Gospels*. Covering the same ground and using revised parts of the earlier book, this new book is more complete, reviews the study of the Gospels up to date especially in the light of

Form-Criticism, and adds much new material. Six chapters deal with introductory matters essential to the study of the Gospels, six deal directly with the four Gospels. Mark is much more thoroughly explored, since three of the six chapters are devoted to it while one chapter only is given to each of the other three Evangelists. Eight charts, diagrams, tables and lists illustrate various theories, relationships, and contents of pre-Gospel sources and early Christian writings. Detailed outlines set forth the contents of each Gospel. A selected bibliography of about 150 titles, arranged topically, concludes the book.

Interesting observations on many debatable points attract the attention of the reader. Papias' famous statement is wrong. Mark did write "in order" (p. 86). "Logia" (divine oracles) could not refer to Matthew or to any other Gospel. There are clear signs of the presence of Q in Mark. It constitutes about ten and one-half per cent of Mark (p. 109). Q deals with discipleship. "It can hardly have been a gospel or even an outline of one" (pp. 60, 146). The Petrine element in Mark is far less than commonly assumed (p. 112). The author of Mark may have been the John Mark known from Acts, but much more probably he was a Roman Christian who lived in another world than the Palestine of Jesus' day (p. 116). On this hypothesis Grant does not explain how John Mark's name became associated with the writing.

Luke is not only a historian, he is a poet (p. 123). His work is earlier than Matthew's. There is no ready answer to the question of Luke's identity as the traditional companion to Paul (p. 128). Luke-Acts is the most valuable writing in the New Testament (p. 133). Matthew is the ecclesiastical Gospel. Matthew was a Christian Hellenist Jew, not identifiable with the tax-collector among the Twelve. He worked with the deftest literary skill with his sources. He writes as a teacher in the church. But "it is impossible to believe that the teaching of Jesus was as thoroughly 'apocalyptic-eschatological' as Matthew presupposes" (p. 152).

John is the Gospel of the Hellenists. Grant lightly dismisses possible parallels to John in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The few found are really minor compared with the vast array in Hellenistic religious literature (p. 175). Nor does he think any of the Gospels were written in Aramaic. They had their origin in a Greek-speaking Gentile world (p. 34). John's Gospel is an apologetic statement of Christian faith and practice in wholly new terms, "a Hellenistic religious mystery-drama," not history, though dealing with an early tradition like that which underlies Mark (p. 178). John did not write to supplement the Synoptic tradition. He was not a Jew but a Levantine or Greek, perhaps a converted gnostic, "a fairly young man, at most middle-aged" (p. 178). Thus Grant does not support the traditional views about any of the authors of the Gospels, though he does state the possibility for Mark and Luke. He holds that John's prologue, purged of its historical comments, is a real hymn, written to be sung (p. 170). But Grant's claim that John rarely uses *kyrios* (Lord) (p. 165) can scarcely be maintained when the word appears fifty-three times in the Gospel of which thirty-six refer to Jesus.

This is an outstanding work in its field, compact with great learning, interwoven with numerous references to original sources, and strong in its scholarly judgments and choices. There are no concessions to the nontechnical reader. On one page (87) the scholar's vocabulary floods with such terms as *nomina sacra*, *protasis*, *incipit evangelium Jesu Christi*, as well as a line of Greek capitals. Professional colleagues of Grant will revel in abundance of details, clear full outlines, neat formulas, and in the penetrating analyses and summaries of many hypotheses of scholars, past

and present. Yet any diligent student or thoughtful layman can also gain satisfying insights into the present status of study about the origins of the Gospels. This study "under the generally accepted canons of modern historical and literary criticism" will provide "positive results for Christian faith" (p. 8).

DWIGHT M. BECK

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**Maccabees, Zealots, and Josephus.** By WILLIAM REUBEN FARMER. New York: Columbia University Press, 1956. ix-239 pp. \$4.50.

The basic theme of this study is that the instigators of the Jewish revolt against the Romans in 66 A.D. were not secular, self-seeking brigands and robbers, as depicted by Josephus, the pro-Roman apologist; on the contrary, they were pious, religious, selfless patriots, imbued with nationalistic hopes and zealous for the Law, the Temple, and the Holy Land. Their closest historical counterparts were the heroic Maccabees who led the successful war against the Syrians in the second century B.C. Indeed, the Maccabees may be said to have been the prototypes of the Zealots; there probably was a positive relationship between these two nationalistic movements.

The resemblance between the Zealots and Maccabees has been noted by a number of scholars, as Dr. Farmer recognizes. But in addition he has elaborated the similarities and possible relationships with a considerable amount of data, much of it drawn from Josephus the detractor of the Zealots. His attitude toward Josephus is ambivalent: he is unreliable because he uses history for apologetics and propaganda; yet he is dependable because he is "above all concerned with writing true history" (p. 22). Most critics of Josephus will have difficulty agreeing with the second statement. That there were marked resemblances between the two movements is clearly shown by Dr. Farmer; however, he tends to overlook the differences between the Syrian and the Roman situation. There may have been some direct relationship between the Maccabees and Zealots, but it is difficult to conclude, as Dr. Farmer seemingly implies, that the later group was the outgrowth of the earlier.

In a chapter dealing with the Qumran community Dr. Farmer suggests that it, too, was a religio-nationalistic group having earlier affinities with the Maccabees and later associations with the Zealots and other patriotic groups. However, it might be noted that whereas the Zealots were zealous for the Temple, the Qumran group apparently rejected it, and had their own priests and cultus. Hence their association with the Zealots is dubious.

Further, he states that the relations between the Qumran group and the "John the Baptist movement and the early Christian community are quite significant," though he admits that these significant relationships are as yet "undefined" (p. 161). He also surmises that ultimately the "Qumran membership was probably assimilated by the Jewish Christian community" as well as by other Jewish groups, but evidence for this interesting conclusion is not cited.

Dr. Farmer has performed a service in directing attention to the importance of Jewish nationalism for an understanding of the life and teachings of Jesus. However, the suggestion that Jesus stood within the main stream of this Jewish nationalism, as "reflected in the major parties of the Jewish national resistance movement" (p. 191), may be open to question. He apparently believes, but does not say categorically, that Jesus was a thoroughgoing Jewish nationalist throughout most of his career, matching both the Maccabees and the Zealots in his patriotism. He not only matched the zeal of the Zealots, but he was crucified as one. He was acclaimed

as the King of the Jews, a nationalistic title which he never denied. His triumphal entry into Jerusalem was ambiguous, but the crowds probably read into this act "something more of the Maccabean-Zealot meaning than Jesus ever intended" (p. 200). He followed the nationalistic pattern by his cleansing of the Temple, but his advice to pay tribute to Caesar was non-nationalistic. However, whatever his previous associations had been, when a few days later he permitted himself to be arrested he now "by this voluntary act disassociated himself in an unmistakable way from the Zealots" (p. 198). On the cross he not only matched, but surpassed the zeal of both Maccabees and Zealots by his spirit of compassion and forgiveness.

This is a somewhat novel presentation of Jesus. True enough, Jesus believed in a theocracy, for according to the Synoptics the Kingdom of God was his basic teaching. However, this Kingdom was not to be brought about by armed revolt against the Romans; instead, it was to be inaugurated by God himself when his people repented of their sins and did his will: "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done."

MARTIN RIST

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**The Twelve.** By EDGAR J. GOODSPEED. Philadelphia: John C. Winston Company, 1957. ix-182 pp. \$3.50.

The subtitle of this book is *The Story of Christ's Apostles*, and is appropriate. It is the latest effort of a famous New Testament scholar who has again made a signal contribution to our understanding of the New Testament and of the men who largely made the Christian Church a reality. It is a rich mine of information, and written with the "eloquence of simplicity" out of a vast background of scholarship and insight, perhaps as would be expected of this distinguished author.

In 1871 A. B. Bruce first published his famous *The Training of the Twelve*. It was a notable landmark in its field and probably the first effort in English to study seriously the twelve disciples, but it turned out to be more of a general commentary on the four Gospels than the title would indicate. Since then nothing of comparable importance or scope has been done, and it seems strange to us that the twelve as such have been so generally overlooked. True, the data relating to these followers of Jesus are limited, but even more limited data in other areas have been made to yield larger results.

Dr. Goodspeed has not attempted anything so massive as Bruce's work. The latter's fourth edition before me has 552 pages as compared with the former's 182, but the Goodspeed work is more nearly confined to its stated theme and presents the evidence in more illuminating fashion. It is concerned directly with what is known of the twelve (or more?) men in the Gospels who have been immortalized in the Church's history because of their intimate personal relations with Jesus during his brief career as teacher in Galilee and Judea.

The book is in two parts. Part One is directly concerned with "The Apostolic Age," in which the pertinent information about the twelve is carefully marshaled and evaluated in its proper historical setting. Incidentally, one learns much New Testament history and interpretation along with these men. Part Two launches out into "The Apostolic Sequels" and deals with the impressions which these twelve made on the subsequent history and literature of the church; it is a good "refresher course" in



early Christian literature. The whole thing is done with artistic skill and completeness, and one puts it down with the feeling that it is the work of a master who has written thus simply out of a larger backlog of understanding.

It is quite possible that the book adds little to our general store of information about the twelve, especially among those who are familiar with the subject matter, but this class is doubtless a minority and does not include many general readers. One wishes the author had given more attention to the problem of the number of disciples, when it is obvious that the figure "twelve" is a traditional symbol and not a mathematical entity. There is frequent repetition of facts and overlapping of details, but this may be due to the author's method in dealing with so many individuals and the varied impressions they made on the Church's history and literature. These are minor matters, however, and should not be permitted to obscure the more important impressions and richer contributions which the book as a whole is likely to make on our general understanding of the twelve. It deserves wide circulation and general reading among intelligent Christians, clergy and laity alike.

CHARLES F. NESBITT

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**The Faith of Israel.** By H. H. ROWLEY. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1957. 220 pp. \$3.50.

Professor Rowley in his introductory chapter emphasizes the fundamental difference between history of religion and theology, and assigns this book to the latter category. For Old Testament theology "all that is not of the essence of the faith of Israel is irrelevant." The problem of the biblical theologian therefore is "to retain a historical sense and to have a firm grasp of the process that provides the material of our theology, while yet not turning our theology back into history." The faith of Israel is a unity, but since the Old Testament content presents both "evolutionary and non-evolutionary factors," the unity is a "unity of growth." A similar readiness to combine viewpoints which are often held to be mutually exclusive appears throughout the book.

The first chapter, "Revelation and Its Media," discusses the revelation of God in nature, by divination and the sacred lots, through priests and prophets as recorded in the Old Testament, and adduces parallel modes of revelation in other religions. In contrast to all the parallels, however, the author finds in the Old Testament "a unique medium of revelation . . . a combination of historical and personal factors which dovetail into one another." The first example of this uniqueness he finds in Moses and the Exodus.

Chapters II-VI treat the obvious themes: God, man, ethics, and immortality, in clear and nontechnical language with ample citations and interpretive comment on biblical material. Somewhat more attention than the introduction promised is given to primitive concepts which were later modified or discarded, but the author asserts that "a merely evolutionary view" cannot account satisfactorily for the Old Testament; "the mere passage of time could not produce from one moment all that we find in the next." Some space is devoted to comparisons with the teachings of other religions. Similarities are noted but the stress is laid on the difference. The Koran like the Old Testament requires obedience to the will of the one God, but "in biblical thought the service of God is always perfect freedom."

The final chapter, "The Day of the Lord," is the only one given a specifically

biblical title. It deals almost exclusively with Old Testament content and its relation to the New Testament. The Messianic hope is discussed in some detail, and an unusually persuasive synthesis of the various elements found in Psalms, Prophets, Wisdom, and Apocalypse is offered. The Teacher of Righteousness in the Qumran scrolls is included.

The book as a whole provides a sane, well-rounded, well-documented and eminently reasonable interpretation of Old Testament thought. It should serve admirably the needs of those seeking a reliable and readable introduction to the religion of the Old Testament. It will be especially welcomed by those who feel the need of a "refresher course." The specialist will appreciate the fair statement of disputed points, both in matters of detail and in fundamental questions such as the importance of the individual in the early period. He will be very grateful for the unusually full references to the available literature on such points which are given in the footnotes.

Some readers may perhaps share the feeling of the reviewer that the book as a whole is too balanced and too reasonable to be a wholly acceptable interpretation of the faith expressed in Daniel 3:17-18—a faith as essentially unreasonable (unreasonable but not unreasoning) as that of Paul or of John Wesley.

LOUISE PETTIBONE SMITH

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**The Ministry in Historical Perspectives.** Edited by H. RICHARD NIEBUHR and DANIEL D. WILLIAMS. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956. 331 pp. \$5.00.

The title of this book is good, because it tells concisely what it is about. It is one of the notable reports emanating from the survey of theological education in the United States and Canada undertaken in 1954 by H. Richard Niebuhr and his staff for the American Association of Theological Schools.

In this case the technique of symposium, not always successful, has proved advantageous, inasmuch as it affords opportunity for expression of the major viewpoints in the Protestant tradition of the ministry, and at the same time provides for chronological continuity on the central theme. Separate chapters deal with the Primitive Church (John Knox), the Ante-Nicene and Later Patristic periods (George Williams), the Middle Ages (Roland H. Bainton), Reformation (Wilhelm Pauck), modern priestly ministries (Edward R. Hardy), Puritan age (Winthrop Hudson), America to 1850 (Sidney E. Mead), and America from 1850 (Robert Michaelson).

Clearly set forth are the variant interpretations and facets of the ministry drawn from different periods and traditions. George Williams, who has the Fathers largely to himself, has done a careful work in tracing the many lines of ministry, priestly and prophetic, through the poorly marked paths of ancient church history. For the very reason that he has sought so diligently not to give favor to any sectarian interest, his survey will probably not satisfy everyone. His concern is diffuse, not central. He finds the minister already presented in at least five images at the start of the Patristic period: administrative elder, apostle, prophet, high priest, manifestation of Christ to believers. By the end of the period he has identified most of the variants in kind and degree that entered into the full-blown Catholic institution of the priesthood. Bainton and Pauck cover vast areas in succinct summary, showing the continuity of most of the functions of the ministry through the ages. There was preaching in the Middle

Ages, for example, as in the age of the Reformation. Hardy and Hudson, dealing with the same period (after the Reformation of the sixteenth century), the same country (England), and some of the same people, have been able to draw startlingly different, yet in the main valid, portraits. George Herbert's *Country Parson* is made to serve more than one ministerial purpose. The vast complexity of the institutional forms of the ministry in American denominationalism is revealed in the chapters by Mead and Michaelsen. The dominance of what came to be regarded in the United States as the prime work of the minister—to save souls—and, in the later period, the utter diversification of ministerial functions, are emphasized.

As usual in such surveys the significant contributions of the Wesleyan revival have been largely ignored, partly because no provision was made in the over-all plan. Only the later and perhaps not altogether admirable manifestations in American Methodism have been noted. Certain other areas, including Roman Catholic and Orthodox communions, have been specifically excluded.

This competent survey of the ministry in historical perspective should provide a much needed antidote to contemporary tendencies to define the ministry solely in terms of function. The harried minister of our day may find both guidance and rebuke as he sees himself in terms of the long heritage of *diakonia*. The theological school may find a secure standpoint from which intelligent planning for theological education can be carried on, and the concerned churchman may discover anew the calling of all believers to be ministers, one to the other, in the community of faith.

FREDERICK A. NORWOOD

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**The Character of Man.** By EMMANUEL MOUNIER. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957. x-341 pp. \$6.00.

To read this book is a thoroughly exciting and rewarding experience. Mounier was the leader of a movement in French thought known as "personalism" because it stressed the need of studying man on his own level without reducing human facts to the more manageable but grossly false categories of automatic responses, instinctual drives, social forces, and the like. The movement wished to preserve what Mounier here calls "the mystery of the person," while at the same time giving an intelligible and even scientific account of man.

This is the second book by Mounier which Harper has published in this country, and it is to be hoped that now his thought will get the serious attention which it deserves from social scientists, psychologists, and philosophers. The author's chief interest is in developing a theory of human character which utilizes insights from a great variety of sources, such as depth psychology, ethics, mystical literature, testing procedures, and theology. The reader must therefore be prepared to jump without warning from one context to another, and may be pardoned if he does not find the author's own perspective always clear.

Indeed, at times the incorporation of so much diverse detail threatens the very structure of Mounier's argument. Digests of experimental research, borrowed categories and classifications, innumerable side debates, tend to obscure and even to defeat the book's main purpose. Yet it must be admitted that the author has generally succeeded in keeping the scientific and the philosophical elements of his approach in a creative tension. He has made a truly humane study of man, comprehensive but not synthetic, multidimensional but not merely pluralistic.

A special word should be said about Cynthia Rowland's fine translation which keeps close to the memorable phrasing of the original and preserves its fast-paced, kaleidoscopic style. It may also be pointed out that Mounier's writing is not only descriptive but evocative, at times almost Augustinian in resonance and suggestiveness.

With the publication of *The Character of Man* the whole effort to relate psychological and theological viewpoints regarding man reaches a new and significant stage. Mounier's account of time as duration, of self-affirmation, and of generosity, to take but a few examples, have a quality which is both classic and frontierlike. This is interdisciplinary "conversation" of a very high order. It deserves most serious attention from all workers in the "sciences of man."

ROGER HAZELTON

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**Personality and Religion.** By PAUL E. JOHNSON. New York: Abingdon Press, 1957. 304 pp. \$4.50.

The last fifty years have seen major developments in psychological insight which enhance the traditional religious view of man. Even those who wanted to be naturalistic and mechanistic in their so-called scientific approach to personality were continually stubbing their intellectual toes against facts of experience that could not be fitted into small and restrictive theories. Wiser minds have tried to take the truths that would not fit into small systems and draw from them a more profound and satisfying view of the nature of man.

The most recent book of Paul E. Johnson, professor of the psychology of religion at Boston University School of Theology, tries to bring the personality of man into this larger focus, not by rejecting the insights of those who worked primarily within a secular framework, but rather by employing their limited insights to illuminate the unlimited aspects of man's nature.

Dr. Johnson has sought to do this not primarily by a scholarly critique that bears the limiting marks of a doctoral thesis on the subject. Although his book has the mark of profound scholarship, it is essentially a friendly book that goes out of its way to make the reader feel at home with ideas and people. It moves beyond the mood of stilted didactics to the warm conversation and living narrative that helps us to think and feel with real people.

Quickly moving into the major modern concern with the nature and meaning of selfhood, Dr. Johnson makes an interesting and perceptive correlation of the thought of four major theorists in psychology. The self assumes four dimensions: the impersonal, the biological, the social, and the religious. Kurt Lewin with his interest in environment and its impact on the person illuminates the impersonal. Sigmund Freud with his medical background represents an essentially biological and functional interest. Harry Stack Sullivan with his concern for interpersonal relations emphasizes the importance of the social matrix, and Gordon W. Allport with his interest in the emergence of religious values gives emphasis to the quest of the personality for its ideal fulfillment. With some of the strength (and yet aware of the weakness) of traditional personalism, Dr. Johnson then brings together the insights of these four thinkers in outlining the nature of personality as a dynamic, growing, environment-modifying being.

On this basis, the author moves on to interpret the meaning of religious growth, again illuminating the subject with a sensitive use of case material. The special

problems of religious growth are dealt with in the last section of the book which explores the meaning of "wholeness." Here there are echoes of his previous book on the nature and meaning of "Christian Love." For it is here that the theories of personality move beyond mere theories and become one in a basic concern that mediates God's nature in human life through redemptive and fulfilling love.

Any student of human personality (and who can take his professional interest in persons seriously without such a devoted scholarship) will find this book stimulating and rewarding reading. It is profound yet lucid, it is scholarly yet accessible. It is essentially Christian, yet responsive to the best in science and other religious traditions. Dr. Johnson has again put us in his debt for a major contribution in the field of religion and psychology.

EDGAR N. JACKSON

The Mamaroneck Methodist Church, Mamaroneck, New York.

**Christian Commitment: An Apologetic.** By EDWARD JOHN CARNELL. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1957. 319 pp. \$5.00.

Perhaps this study on a third way of knowing can be most significant for our epistemology which is largely confined in a two-dimensional world. One need not agree with the author to appreciate this book.

The persuasion offered in methodology, philosophy, and theology is definitely conservative. The combining of scriptural tenets and experiential discoveries is naïvely presented through experience in personal life. Who can imagine such profundity as is discovered in these pages growing out of experiences that are common in the market places, a lonely walk when depressed ideas govern, and "a headache from tobacco smoke"? Enrichment is gained from the illustration of Christian truths in life's simple pursuits.

The generally accepted truths of the Christian faith are vigorously presented without apology. Certainly, there is kinship between God and man. Man must be understood in the generic. Without all of his faculties, he is not man. Man is the result of the interpermeation of all of his faculties. Whatever God may be in his essence, the word "person" is extensively used as the basis for interrelationships between God and man.

Man in the Christian orbit functions in the environment designated as moral and spiritual. This cannot be separated from the physical and mental, for the three are related; however, attention is possible to the latter two without the third. Truth is reality that encompasses the ontological, the propositional, and personal rectitude. Knowledge is obtained by acquaintance, by inference, and by moral acceptance. The means of knowing by the three methods are "Direct experience, the conceptual ordering of reality, and moral responsibility." The author is eclectic in his epistemology, for he recognizes that man's acquaintance through each aspect of his personality produces knowledge that is invaluable for the highest knowledge of the Christian.

The description of man's predicament as a creature of time produces expressions that seem to tie the author to the culture of the Reformers. What else could such ideas as "judicial sentiment," "federal headship," and "justice," as they are discussed in these pages, connote? Classical philosophy is not of much help in conveying the idea of the realm in which God and man have fellowship. Existentialism, though defective, is related to the explosive encounter of man with reality when, by self-



transcendence, man experiences the otherwise unknowable and the "judicial sentiment" is at ease.

This apologia attempts to relate the Christian way to every relationship of man—the world within himself, social groups, and God. Indeed, all of life must come under the scrutiny of the faith—physical, mental, esthetic, moral, and spiritual. The book is altogether too short to deal with any of these comprehensively.

The objective in the mind of the author to strike headlong at the problems inherent in the Christian view is most ambitious and suggestive. However, there do not appear satisfying solutions to the age-old enigmas of freedom, the problem of evil, and total depravity. It would seem that when the reader is ready for a revelation the author falls back upon a dogmatic sentence. One of the weaknesses of the book is the brusque handling of difficult dilemmas.

What to me is superb about this book is the defense of the position that the Christian knows because he knows. This knowledge comes because the person is within the orbit of an experience in which only the participant discovers the reality or realities. The attempt to find through experience the assurances sounded in the Scriptures about God, about Jesus Christ, about God in human life—the Holy Spirit, the positiveness of evil, and the certainty of the outcome depending upon God working through man, makes the reading of this book a most worth-while experience. I do not believe the book will live as one of the great apologia; yet, it has a message that the thinkers of mid-twentieth century should appreciate, and the more general readers need. Certainly, the title is a striking challenge! Christians are committed, and greatly so, according to the conclusions of this work. Meeting God is no insignificant event but an encounter with lasting results.

H. THORNTON FOWLER

McKendree Methodist Church, Nashville, Tennessee.

**Puritanism in the Period of the Great Persecution, 1660-1688.** By GERALD R. CRAGG. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1957. 326 pp. \$5.50.

What a magnificent book! Seldom does a work of erudition cause tears to start in one's eyes. The intrepidity of the Puritans in the last days of the persecution fills one alike with wonder and heart-searching as to whether one would have been equal to such trials of derision and violence, restraint of goods, imprisonment under foul conditions and death from maltreatment, in addition to anxiety for dependents left destitute and distress of mind in case loved ones did not share the same convictions. It is a magnificent story not only for its heroism but also for its fruits. Such suffering contributed mightily to the achievement of religious and civil liberty.

It is also a heartening story because amid so many stories of brutality there are records also of surprising decency and humanity. Often magistrates did their best to evade the harsh sentences which they were called upon to execute, and neighbors refused to buy the distrainted goods of Dissenters when offered for sale. At the same time it is a depressing story because persecution did succeed in the end in breaking the spirit of Nonconformity, in part by eliminating the people of spirit. The survivors passed from the exuberant to the prosaic. The book goes on to describe Puritan life and worship as carried on by those who were not in prison.

This is a magnificent book also because of the way in which it is written. Into it has gone the most exacting investigation. The author brings to it a deep under-

standing of the faith and of the spiritual power behind such heroism. At the same time he has the objectivity to observe and record the shortcomings of the saints.

ROLAND H. BAINTON

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**George Whitefield: Wayfaring Witness.** By STUART C. HENRY. New York: Abingdon Press, 1957. 224 pp. \$3.75.

The appearance of this definitive biography of the "fabulous career" of George Whitefield, in which there is poignant awareness of the cultural, sociological and theological facets of eighteenth-century life in Britain and America is indeed a publishing event of dramatic consequence for students of Methodism and the Evangelical Revival.

Professor Henry teaches in the department of Religion of the College of Arts and Sciences, and is adjunct professor of Church History in Perkins School of Theology, at Southern Methodist University. This volume is another contribution from the burgeoning scholarship of Duke University, where his basic research was presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the doctorate.

The author writes with brilliant wit and penetrating social criticism. George Whitefield is discerned in all his greatness and is, at the same time, somewhat ruthlessly divested of that spurious mythology which seems, inevitably, to become so much a part of the professional *accoutrement* of the evangelist. The result is a heightened appreciation of the man—foibles and all—and a more sober appraisal of his enduring significance. Professor Henry has recourse to the novels, the stage plays and even the bawdy-house limericks and songs which lampooned Whitefield. He discerningly divulges the social dialectic through which these sources help us the better to understand the man and the Methodist movement. It is precisely the unanticipated comment, the unorthodox quote, and the startling footnote that sustains the exciting involvement produced by this book.

Professor Henry, with the skill of a playwright, deceptively leads the reader into an interpretation of Whitefield's acknowledgment of success which would do justice to and would be understood, for example, by Conrad Hilton or Billy Graham as well as countless others. The rise to high acclaim from humble origins, and the apparently uncontrived yet desperate outpourings of human energy in utterly unselfish dedication to human need under the aegis of what is understood to be God's will for humanity in the present moment, is presented only to prepare the unsuspecting reader for the plunging scalpel of salvific demythologization. Whitefield was a success. The author leads us into companionship with this tireless evangelist in his amazing travel from city to city in Britain, across the Atlantic thirteen times, and into that more profound arena where one may stand with Whitefield as he preaches stirringly to a congregation of ten thousand in Cambuslang, Scotland, and then administers Holy Communion to each and every auditor. Here is ecclesiastical success—but Professor Henry always has the scalpel ready.

How did Whitefield understand the gospel? How many were his faults in interpreting the Scriptures even in eighteenth-century terms! As regards his social ethic, we are reminded that he could write a moving essay to the "inhabitants of Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas" on the evils of slavery (1740), but within a few years would be the prime mover before the English courts to have both slavery and rum

introduced into Georgia (both being prohibited by the original charter) because these practices might enhance the success of the Orphanage at Bethesda. The scalpel of truth reveals, seemingly, a vice in every virtue. And it is precisely this dramatic presentation (which at times makes one think that, like the work of Michener, here is writing that awaits only the talent of Rodgers and Hammerstein to make available another Broadway "hit") that reveals the inevitable finiteness and shortcomings of the study.

And Professor Henry is poignantly aware of this. What he has done is brilliant fulfillment of a task desperately needing scholarly attention. The book is beyond criticism in its faithful acknowledgment of every canon of responsible scholarship. As the author intended, the reader will raise a cloud of questions left unanswered by this study. Since this work is primarily biographical, no attempt is made to interpret the revival in depth either ecclesiastically or theologically. For example, how are Whitefield and the Wesleys to be understood in the light of Puritanism and all its varied manifestations? Will the study of evangelism and the evangelists ever bring us to an adequate vision of the phenomenon called Methodism? Here is documented evidence that the people called Methodists have a tremendous vocation in self-understanding.

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**The Great Awakening in New England.** By EDWIN SCOTT GAUSTAD. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957. 173 pp. (bibl. notes and index). \$3.00.

No writer has shown more evidence of catching the spirit of the subject of his examination than has the author of this study. Filled with excerpts from more source materials than one would expect to find in such a little book, Dr. Gaustad has given connection and movement to this work that results in excellent readability. At times one feels that the author has announced theses without really playing fair in letting the reader have the benefit of enough evidence—and some fussy people will resent a few of his so-called "bold strokes." Methodists, for example, will not all agree with the neat little announcement that they along with the pietists, "despite Wesley's free grace," had a theology erected on Calvinistic assumptions.

But this is not important—for the study describes and communicates the nature of the rise and the sudden ending of the Great Awakening in New England. Jonathan Edwards comes to life, and walks with "bold strokes." When the revival was over, disputes broke out; one of the best was over whether to call the quiet the "sweet season" or simply the sign of an emotionally exhausted people who had run out of both inspiration and ideas. The best chapter is entitled "Cascades: Chauncy and Edwards."

As it all turned out, the fruits of the Awakening had to be waited for, but fruits there were. Social responsibility was talked about; institutions were formed; Indians were ministered to; and later—much later—some theology began to show up. Arminians, Unitarians and other forms of liberalism found means of existence. Examination of the Scripture was inevitable, and did take place. The authoritarianism of Calvinism was challenged; proof-text preaching was vigorously disputed; moral improvement and social betterment were expected to prove the value of conversion.

All of this was an awakening—but much more vital than the “confrontation” which either the author or Jonathan Edwards had apparently expected.

E. S. B.

**A Rauschenbusch Reader.** Edited by BENSON Y. LANDIS. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957. xxii-167 pp. \$3.00.

Benson Landis has given us a perfectly wonderful picture of the thought and time to which Walter Rauschenbusch addressed himself. With an introduction by Harry Emerson Fosdick, one of the disciples of Rauschenbusch, Editor Landis has brought together enough excerpts from his many writings, the heart of each of them—but more vital, he has introduced each of the chapters with a brief description of the times in which Rauschenbusch did these things. Landis tells us what the shows on Broadway were; who was in the White House; what were the major political issues; how fared the economy of the world; with whom people were having wars—and even what were the popular songs. The chapters are all introduced in this interesting way, so that as one gets into the reading of what Rauschenbusch had to say, there is a sense of timing and relevance which bring life and meaning to the volume.

At times one wishes a better index could have been compiled; yet careful use of the table of contents makes this book of readings more useful than any recent collection this reviewer has seen. Students will look in vain for footnotes, but the bibliography is clear. It will inspire many people to read more Rauschenbusch than has been read in many a year.

E. S. B.

**In the Sight of the Lord.** By STEPHEN F. BAYNE. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958. x-150 pp. \$2.00.

**Our Lord and Saviour: His Life and Teachings.** By PHILIP CARRINGTON. Greenwich, Conn.: The Seabury Press, 1958. v-138 pp. \$1.75.

These are two “Lenten books.” The first is the Harper book for Lent, 1958, by the Episcopal Bishop of Olympia, Washington. Subtitled “Our World Seen Through the Eyes of Christ,” it presents eight meditations on situations as Christ saw them, designed to lead through “disciplined imagination” to mental prayer. “Read these chapters as prayer and not preaching.” “I am not anxious that you shall know what I think . . . I am anxious that you shall start with the simple picture, as I do, and then let God lead you, through your own imagination, to see what He wants you to see.”

The Seabury Lenten book is written by the Archbishop of Quebec. It is a brief account of the life and teachings of Christ designed principally for lay readers, devout and conservative in its scholarship. Stress is laid at the end on the close relationship between the “tremendous flesh-and-blood fact of the death and resurrection” and the apostolic fellowship within which the resurrection was a fact; it is through the holy, catholic, and apostolic Church that the fellowship of God with men is perennially possible.

E. H. L.

## Book Notices

Charles W. Forman of the Divinity School at Yale has done the latest in the Layman's Theological Library, *A Faith for the Nations* (Westminster, \$1.00). Admitting that all men do not believe that human unity is the will of God, Dr. Forman insists such a belief is the only foundation for unity. With delightful sincerity the reader is conducted on a thoroughly convincing tour of the theological argument and whether he likes it or not, he is impressed with its urgency and sincerity.

G. L. Lewis has translated the latest of the Ethical and Religious Classics, this one written by Katib Chelebi with the title *The Balance of Truth* (Macmillan, \$3.25). It is a study of humorous difficulties in reconciling theories (no coffee, no smoking, no bribery, etc.) with the coffee-drinking, smoking, bribery, etc. practices of the Muslims. Interesting—and might be good for the study of pietists, if any are still around.

In this same context we must mention Frank Baker's *Methodism and the Love Feast* (Macmillan, \$1.00), where a study of the *Agape* of the Early Church is examined in the practice of early Methodists. Since Holy Communion cannot be a modern ecumenical practice, Dr. Baker was encouraged to tell this story to see if it might provide a second way for a practice of intercommunion. It is a good historic contribution, but the enthusiasm of the modern ecumenical fathers has not yet created any editorial flurry of activity. Experimentation with the Love Feast in modern England has been good, and Anglicans and Methodists have seen a way to use it jointly. Mayhaps it needs more trying—but Baker thinks it can be effective and concludes this little study with a helpful section on how to conduct a love feast.

Blaise Levai has edited a significant symposium as a study guide on missions in modern India with the title *Revolution in Missions* (The Christian Literature Society, c/o Committee for Near East and Asia, New York). An editor is interested, naturally, in the method of presentation: it reflects the personality of India's proud new nationalism; it clings to some old British customs to proclaim a new Christian leadership in a liberated land. Western Christians will do well to examine this volume before reaching easy conclusions about the state of affairs in India. The Indians believe that they have a revolution going on—and this is evidence.

A salute to Harpers for their latest in the paperback series of Torchbooks. Excellent classics such as these deserve more—but here is a partial list of valuable reprints: *The Rise of Puritanism*, Haller, \$1.85; *Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion*, Sabatier, \$1.45; *Spiritual Problems in Contemporary Literature*, ed. Hopper, \$1.50; *Erasmus and the Age of Reformation*, Huizinga, \$1.50; *The Travail of Religious Liberty*, Bainton, \$1.45; *The Religious Aspect of Philosophy*, Royce, \$1.75; *Medieval Faith and Symbolism*, Coulton, \$1.85; and *Moses*, Buber, \$1.25.

Another valuable paperback reprint is the Galaxy Book No. 7, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, by Charles N. Cochrane (Oxford, \$2.95). And while not technically a reprint, there is a fine series of radio talks by Truman Douglass that Harpers has published under the title *Why Go to Church?* Clearly leveled at the layman, this little book at its modest price of \$2.00 gives good answers to those "loaded" questions which most churchmen have put to them.

E. S. B.



Three paperbacks published by the Methodist Student Movement in Nashville will be of particular interest to professors and students on our college campuses: *Confessing the Gospel Mark Preached*, by Edmund Perry; *Form and Reality: Art as Communication*, by John W. Dixon, Jr.; and *The Responsible Student*, a colloquy by members of the faculty of Boston University School of Theology. This last discussion aims to stimulate thought on the place of the student in the world community, and has a chapter, "What It Means to Be Human—And a College Student." Each, \$1.00.

Harper has come up this past fall with what is perhaps the definitive biography of Africa's most famous missionary: *David Livingstone: His Life and Letters*, by George Seaver (\$6.95). Dr. Seaver has included material from the new collection of Livingstone manuscripts in the Central African Archives and from manuscripts which the Livingstone family still privately own. The result is a 650-page book, complete with maps, that promises to be the last word on David Livingstone—at least for some time to come.

James Stewart of Scotland is considered by many as one of the top preachers anywhere today. Back in 1933 his *The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ* was published in England and has been imported into this country ever since. Now this little study book, which is close to being a classic, is available in an inexpensive paperback edition (Abingdon, \$1.50) and has been revised for American use. It is ideal for classroom use and for study groups, with discussion questions and readings listed after each chapter.

The Church Peace Union has this to say about James P. Warburg's *Agenda for Action*: "Few men in our time have written more on U.S. foreign policy than has James P. Warburg. You may not agree with all he has to say but you will, I am sure, agree that he is a challenging author. . . . It is a thought-provoking volume dealing with many of today's perplexing problems." These problems range from Europe to the Middle East, international trade, and the citizen's responsibility for world leadership. A paperback, Academy, \$1.25.

JEAN HAGER

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Abingdon has recently published a small book by William Barclay, *Letters to the Seven Churches* (\$2.00), giving background and interpretation for this section of the Book of Revelation, and showing the remarkable contemporary quality it has for us today.

James M. Robinson has written the 21st "Study in Biblical Theology," *The Problem of History in Mark* (Alec R. Allenson, Inc.). Mark, he finds, has been successively understood as "immanent objective history," "non-historical theology," "mythology," and in contemporary thought as "theologically understood history." Like all this ecumenically oriented series, this able study brings us up to date on European scholarship in the field.

Dover Publications (920 Broadway, New York) has released a complete unabridged edition of a great monument of scholarship that has been generally unavailable for nearly fifty years. This is John Julian's *Dictionary of Hymnology*, the second edition of 1907, which includes the history of over 40,000 hymns and is still the standard reference work. Two volumes, \$15.00.

E. H. L.



